



Class BX8495

Book M35A35

1848
PRESENTED BY

Mrs. V. H. H. H.





THE LIFE
(Brisbane)
OF
DARCY, LADY MAXWELL,
OF POLLOCK;

LATE OF EDINBURGH:

COMPILED FROM HER

VOLUMINOUS DIARY AND CORRESPONDENCE,

AND FROM

OTHER AUTHENTIC DOCUMENTS.

BY THE REV. JOHN LANCASTER.

"My own heart has been so much edified and animated by what I have read in the memoirs of persons who have been eminent for wisdom and piety, that I cannot but wish the treasure may be more increased; and I would hope that the world may gather the like valuable fruits from the LIFE I am now attempting."—DODDRIDGE.

"Whose FAITH follow, considering the end of their conversation."
ST. PAUL.

New-York:

PUBLISHED BY LANE & TIPPETT,
FOR THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, 200 MULBERRY-STREET.

JOSEPH LONGKING, PRINTER.

1848.

BX8495
.M35A35
1848

Gift

Library of Congress

31 1935



HLR 4048 38

CONTENTS TO LADY MAXWELL.

PREFACE	Page 5
CHAPTER I.—Preliminary observations—Lady Maxwell's birth, parentage, and education—She removes to Edinburgh; to London—Returns to Scotland—Is married to Sir Walter Maxwell—Death of Sir Walter and infant son—She becomes penitent—Corresponds with Mr. Wesley—Joins his society—Obtains mercy	9
CHAPTER II.—Lady Maxwell's love of retirement—From her youth and elevated rank exposed to temptation and danger—Relinquishes her gay acquaintances—Connection with Lady Glenorchy—They differ in religious sentiment, but continue united in affection—Account of Lady H. Hope—The manner in which Lady Maxwell spent her time—Her love to the means of grace—Constant thirst for full salvation	30
CHAPTER III. 1768.—Advantages of autobiography—Lady Maxwell's diary	40
CHAPTER IV. 1769.—Lady Maxwell's diary continued	43
CHAPTER V. 1770.—Lady Maxwell establishes a school at Edinburgh—Retires to Saughton-hall—Has the gospel preached in her house—Diary continued	50
CHAPTER VI. 1771.—Lady Maxwell's diary continued	59
CHAPTER VII. 1772.—Remarks on the duty of fasting—On the sacrament of the Lord's supper—The manner in which it is administered in Scotland—Diary continued	69
CHAPTER VIII. 1773.—Diary continued	82
CHAPTER IX. 1774.—Remarks on Providence—Diary continued	93
CHAPTER X. 1775.—Diary continued	105
CHAPTER XI. 1776.—Diary continued	119
CHAPTER XII. 1777.—Diary continued	135
CHAPTER XIII. 1778.—Diary continued	143
CHAPTER XIV. 1779.—Diary continued	151
CHAPTER XV. 1780.—Lady Maxwell's correspondence with Lady Henrietta Hope	161
CHAPTER XVI. 1781.—Correspondence with Lady Hope—Miss Ritchie—The Hon. Miss Napier—Reflections on temptations—Diary continued	184
CHAPTER XVII. 1782.—Correspondence with Lady Hope—Diary continued	198
CHAPTER XVIII. 1783.—Diary and correspondence continued	204
CHAPTER XIX. 1784.—Diary and correspondence continued	215

	Page
CHAPTER XX. 1785.—Diary and correspondence continued -	223
CHAPTER XXI. 1786.—Death of the Ladies Hope and Glenorchy— Lady Maxwell appointed executrix of the latter—Visits England— Meets with the Rev. Alexander Mather—Character of—Corre- spondence with him, and the Rev. C. Atmore -	232
CHAPTER XXII. 1787.—Difference of opinion entertained by Chris- tians on the nature and extent of salvation—Lady Maxwell's sen- timents on this subject—Attains full salvation—Her views with regard to the Trinity—She establishes Sabbath-day schools—Cor- responds with Miss Ritchie, Mr. Mather, and Mr. Atmore -	244
CHAPTER XXIII. 1788.—Particulars respecting Hope Chapel— Lady Maxwell visits Bristol—Forms an intimacy with Mrs. E. Johnson—Short account of—Correspondence continued -	267
CHAPTER XXIV. 1789.—Lady Maxwell's multifarious engagements —Diary continued—Again visits Bristol—Meets with many per- plexities respecting Hope Chapel -	280
CHAPTER XXV. 1790.—Correspondence resumed with Mr. Mather, Mrs. Johnson, and Miss Ritchie—Lady Maxwell visits Carlisle, Wigton, and Workington -	285
CHAPTER XXVI. 1791.—Death of the Rev. John Wesley—Lady Maxwell again visits Bristol—Fresh difficulties at Hope Chapel— Change in the mode of conducting public worship—Correspondence continued -	294
CHAPTER XXVII. 1792.—Diary and correspondence continued -	303
CHAPTER XXVIII. 1793.—State of the nation at this period—Spread of infidelity—War proclaimed with France—Meetings for prayer among Christians—Diary and correspondence continued -	310
CHAPTER XXIX. 1794.—Diary and correspondence continued -	319
CHAPTER XXX. 1795.—Diary and correspondence continued -	327
CHAPTER XXXI. 1796.—Diary and correspondence continued -	334
CHAPTER XXXII. 1797.—Diary and correspondence continued -	341
CHAPTER XXXIII. 1798.—Diary and correspondence continued -	351
CHAPTER XXXIV. 1799.—Diary and correspondence continued -	361
CHAPTER XXXV. 1800.—Diary and correspondence continued -	369
CHAPTER XXXVI. 1801-3.—Lady Maxwell's experience attains a greater uniformity—Diary continued -	376
CHAPTER XXXVII. 1804-7.—Diary continued -	382
CHAPTER XXXVIII. 1808-10.—Lady Maxwell's diary concluded —Her last illness and death—Letter on, by the Hon. Miss Napier— Inscription on monumental tablet -	389
Lady Maxwell's character	397

PREFACE TO LADY MAXWELL.

ELEVEN years have nearly elapsed, since the pious writer of the following papers exchanged mortality for eternal life. It was generally known by her intimate friends that she had left to posterity a record of the gracious dealings of God toward her; and it was sanguinely hoped that this record would soon be given to the religious world. These hopes, however, were destined for a season to undergo a painful disappointment. Lady Maxwell had intrusted her papers to the care of the honourable Miss Napier, with a solemn injunction that after her ladyship's decease they should be transmitted to one of the Wesleyan ministers; but she neither specified any individual, nor fixed on any particular period when this obligation should be discharged. Thus a liberty seemed to be allowed for the exercise of choice and discretion; and a delay in delivering up the manuscripts was the too natural consequence. The *feelings*, also, were deeply interested in this delay. Miss N. had long been an inmate in the house of her illustrious relative; had enjoyed the benefit of her pious counsel, holy example, and fervent prayers; and when left to lament her loss, felt an almost idolatrous attachment to every thing in her possession which had belonged to her departed friend. This attachment was frequently assigned to the editor as the principal, if not the only reason for the detention of these papers: for, though Miss N. readily acknowledged that her ladyship's injunction was, on her part, binding, and determined to obey it; yet she indulged a desire to retain the valuable deposit until the period of her own dissolution.

Six years passed away and nothing had, as yet, appeared to gratify the ardent expectation of her ladyship's numerous friends, when the Rev. W. Atherton, a gentleman who had been honoured with a personal acquaintance, yielding to frequent and earnest solicitations, attempted "A Sketch of the Life and Character of Lady Maxwell." This valuable memoir was first published in the Methodist Magazine in the latter end of the year 1816. Its author, considering he had to lament the want of original documents, has certainly delineated the exalted character with great fidelity; and, though he regretted the want of "a master's hand," has executed his task in a manner highly honourable to himself. A great part of this memoir, which, with a few omissions, afterward appeared in a respectable Scottish monthly publication, has been introduced into the present work.

Still more recently, even while the editor was preparing these volumes for the press, a work entitled "A Christian Sketch of Lady Maxwell," was announced to the public. This, at first,

excited in his mind a degree of curiosity. He hoped, however, that additional information would thus be communicated, which might enable him to illustrate more fully those manuscripts which were then passing under his review ; and he, of course, eagerly procured the work. Happily for him, he was already in possession of ample materials, or his mortification, like that of many others, must have been great. He found this "Christian Sketch," though coming before the public under the disguised pretension of an original work, little more than a mangled, unfair, and, in his estimation, very disingenuous reprint of the memoir to which he has already alluded.

It was during the editor's residence in Edinburgh that he became personally acquainted with Miss Napier, and the acquaintance had not long been formed before he was requested to visit her, on a sick and dying bed. It was then he first learned the nature of that engagement into which she had entered, and received from her repeated assurances that it should be sacredly regarded. After a tedious and painful affliction, she was removed by death ; and the manuscripts with which she had been intrusted, were, by her appointment, presented to the editor in the most obliging manner. These included her ladyship's diary, and the letters addressed to Lady Hope. For most of the other letters he is indebted to the kindness of Mrs. Mortimer, formerly Miss Ritchie, one of her ladyship's correspondents.

On the nature of Lady Maxwell's writings, it is now unnecessary for him to give an opinion ; but he may, perhaps, be indulged to state the principle by which he has been chiefly guided, in making the present selection. The Diary included a period of *forty-two years*, and extended over *two thousand three hundred quarto pages*, closely written ; and the letters in his possession amounted to nearly *three hundred*. The limits to which the publication was confined, would admit but a very scanty portion of the originals ; yet he hoped that, with care, such a selection might be made, as should leave on the reader's mind, the same impressions of her ladyship's experience and character, as would have been produced by the perusal of the whole. To this, with him a *primary object*, he has paid the most scrupulous attention. It was also in accordance with this principle, that he determined to regulate the arrangement of the papers, as much as possible, in strictly chronological order. Besides, as the principle involved an endeavour to present her ladyship's character and conduct under every shade of difference, the reader's pleasure and profit were thus consulted, by securing to the selection the greatest possible variety.

With her ladyship's style, the editor has indulged no liberty, but such as must be found necessary in all posthumous works, which have not received the finishing polish of the author's own hand.

Though he wished to avoid all unnecessary obtrusion of himself on the attention of the reader—a thing quite unpardonable while in company with Lady Maxwell—yet he has, where necessity or propriety seemed to demand it, offered a few occasional remarks, which he trusts will be found to give an additional interest to these volumes.

The benefit to be derived from a serious perusal of works like the present, has been amply described by pious writers of different denominations; and it certainly augurs well of the present state of the religious world, that the demand for Christian biography is on the increase. Such writings, indeed, are peculiarly interesting. They unfold to us the secrets of other hearts, and thus qualify us to commune more profitably with our own:—"they increase our stock of facts with regard to the human mind, and powerfully promote our advancement in one of the most useful branches of knowledge—the knowledge of man:"—they enable us to trace the sublime march of an immortal and redeemed spirit, through the intricacies and dangers of this land of peril, to the kingdom of our heavenly Father:—they evince the efficacy of grace—they publish the triumphs of faith, the pleasures of devotion, the truth of the promises, the faithfulness of God:—they especially tend to elevate our hopes; give a higher and better tone to our feelings, and with a sweet constraining influence stimulate to high and laudable endeavours.

These are assuredly desirable objects. Are we not all in danger of grovelling too much in the mud and mire of this world's concerns? Is there not too much reason to fear, that unjust and unworthy notions of the efficacy of the atonement, and of the believer's privileges, are extensively prevalent? Professors, in general, are consequently resting satisfied with comparatively low and inferior attainments. Thus many, who ought to manifest the vigour and stability of *fathers*, continue to exhibit all the weakness of *infancy*, or all the inconstancy of *youth*. These volumes, it is confidently hoped, will be found calculated, by the blessing of God, to inspire more exalted views and expectations; and especially aid in the important duties of the closet:—by leading the reader to habits of self-inspection; by laying open to him the recesses of his own heart; by enabling him to detect the devices of his spiritual adversaries; by teaching him the nature and advantages of faith; and, by encouraging him to expect the operation of God the Spirit on his soul: he will thus be prepared for the fervours of devotion, become qualified to "worship God in the Spirit," be determined to follow the Lord fully, and go from his private sanctuary strengthened for the discharge of the varied duties of his high and honourable calling.

Though Lady Maxwell was decided in her own religious views, she cheerfully gave the right hand of fellowship to all who love our Lord Jesus Christ. When times and seasons seemed either

to justify or demand it, she did not hesitate firmly to avow her principles : but she was never fond of controversy :—and she greatly lamented that Christians should suffer any nonessential points of difference to diminish their affection for one another, or to destroy that union and co-operation which should ever subsist among them. The editor trusts he has been influenced by the same spirit :—he has fearlessly stated facts, but he wished to avoid all contentious disputation. The religious sentiments of her ladyship are now fairly submitted to the candid investigation of the religious public ; and certainly these can be no farther important than as they accord with the infallible standard of truth : but for piety to God—for benevolence to man—for deadness to the world—and for her strenuous endeavours to promote the interest of Sion, and the salvation of souls, Lady Maxwell's example may be safely recommended as worthy the imitation of all who are seeking for glory, immortality, and eternal life.

THE EDITOR.

Brompton, Kent, March 6, 1821.

LIFE OF LADY MAXWELL.

CHAPTER I.

Preliminary observations—Lady Maxwell's birth, parentage, and education—She removes to Edinburgh; to London—Returns to Scotland—Is married to Sir Walter Maxwell—Death of Sir Walter and infant son—She becomes penitent—Corresponds with Mr. Wesley—Joins his society—Obtains mercy.

THE design of Christianity is to raise the soul of man to a participation of the divine nature. As it came from God, so it leads to God. It is a beam, shining forth from the Deity himself, to irradiate that path which conducts to immortal life. In its adaptation to secure this object, we perceive the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of its divine Author. It finds man enveloped with darkness, and translates him into marvellous light:—it finds him guilty, and points him to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world:—it finds him depraved and miserable, and directs him to a fountain open for sin and uncleanness. By the evidences of its divinity—the sublimity of its doctrines—the efficacy of its atonement—the purity and benevolence of its precepts—the energy of its motives—and the glory of its rewards—the understanding is enlightened, the judgment convinced, and the noblest affections of the soul called into exercise. But this divine system demands from man, would he enjoy the blessings it offers to communicate, something more than mere speculation. It requires, not only his profound attention and admiration, but also his implicit credence and cheerful acquiescence; not only the homage of the understanding, but also the willing sacrifice of the heart. It is, when he makes an unreserved surrender of himself to its guidance and authority; when he hastens, as a conscious sinner, to shelter himself under the wings of the atonement; and yields to its purifying spirit, that it conducts him onward to the possession of certain and unfading bliss. Then it is the gospel comes to him, not “in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance;” “casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ:” then it is that grace ascends the throne of the heart, and there reigns “through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord.” He now “worships God in the Spirit, rejoiceth in Christ Jesus, and has no confidence in the flesh.”

“The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.” The important distinction between a religion merely external and formal, and that which has its seat in the heart, is vital in its principles, and purifying in its tendencies, cannot be too frequently nor too closely pressed upon the attention. The necessity of the latter should be clearly stated; its nature and effects should be constantly held up to view. In the ministry of the Saviour, and his immediate successors in the sacred office, we find a perpetual recurrence to these topics; they hold a prominence which cannot be overlooked but by the most careless observers. In the succeeding ages of the church, just in proportion as a faith working by love and purifying the heart has been insisted on, genuine Christianity has prevailed, adorning the life with the fruits of righteousness, and stretching over the habitation of mortals a glory and defence. Secure purity of heart, and rectitude of conduct will follow. Make the tree good, and the fruit also will be good. On this foundation alone must rest all rational hopes of a morality at once pure, benevolent, and disinterested; and to attain all these important results there must be a living union with Jesus:—“Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.”

These vital principles of the religion of the Son of God, perhaps, never more successfully unfold themselves to the attention of mankind than when their energies are displayed in the actual experience, enjoyments, and doings of eminent Christians. These, while living, are lights to the world, shedding a radiance on all within the sphere of their action. Their example is at once lovely, and powerfully influential; and, though dead, many of them continue to speak. By the pious records they have left behind they set forth the power of divine grace, in first subjugating their own hearts; and then, in leading them forward, from the joys of conquest, to the possession of an eternal crown. They beckon to posterity to follow them as they followed Christ. By publishing their errors, they warn of danger; by telling of their conflicts, they summon still contending champions to gird on the whole armour of God; by recording the trophies they have won, they unfurl the banners of the cross; and proclaim, as with shouts of triumph, certain victory to all who continue faithful unto death.

On these and other accounts, it is conceived, such records of the divine goodness should rarely, if ever, be suffered to remain in the shades of oblivion. They are as so many monuments, erected to the praise and glory of God; they are calculated to be extensively beneficial to men; they afford instruction, in one of its most pleasing forms, on subjects of the highest import to every candidate for immortality. Indeed the charms of biogra-

phy have long been both felt and acknowledged. We follow the statesman, the poet, the historian, the philosopher, along their short career of hard-earned fame, with peculiar interest, and each in his place may teach us some useful lesson. But, while we linger here, our views and our gratifications are all confined within the narrow limits of this transitory world. Our admiration may be excited as we gaze on the laurels so nobly won, and so gratefully entwined: but little, if any thing, is taught us that stands immediately connected with the welfare of the soul or with a preparation for a coming eternity. And yet, while contemplating the illustrious achievements of the "mighty dead," we cannot escape the conviction that all the enjoyments and gratifications allied to earth are hastening to an end; we cannot but feel a desire to learn how to secure joys lasting as our nature—durable as the throne of the ETERNAL. Christian biography, then, has this superior claim upon our attention; it teaches us not only *how to live*, but also *how to die*, not only how to acquire the most valuable acquisitions for time, but also how to secure the endless felicities of eternity. Under these impressions, the editor entertains a confident hope that the following memorial will be read with lasting benefit by many, and thus ultimately redound to the glory of God.

Lady Maxwell's maiden name was Darcy Brisbane. She was the youngest daughter of the late Thomas Brisbane, Esq., of Brisbane, in the county of Ayr, and parish of Largs.* It does not appear that there was any thing in Miss D. Brisbane's childhood indicative of her future distinguished eminence in piety. To the drawings of the Father, the teachings of the Spirit, and the first influences of grace, she remained inattentive; and, during the early years of her life, was an entire stranger to all painful apprehensions arising from a consciousness of guilt. She was, indeed, from a child distinguished by a feeling, humane, and charitable disposition. In after life she would often mention the high degree of pleasure which she had enjoyed, even at that early period, in relieving the necessities of the poor, and, on some occasions, in taking off part of her own clothes to cover the shivering limbs of poor children. This, however, as she was accustomed to observe, arose from the mere impulse of generous feeling, not being the effect of religious principle. She had not as yet any conviction, that a benevolence like this is the imperative duty of every Christian. In those charities she had no reference to the glory of God: but the sympathies of her nature were thus gratified, and therefore she loved to indulge them. In the subsequent periods of her history, when her mind was

* The family of Brisbane is of considerable antiquity. The present descendants are in possession of an elbow chair made of oak, having the family arms, with the date 1357, carved on the back.—*Guide through Scotland*, vol. i, p. 257.

enlightened, and her heart purified through obedience to the truth ; this amiable disposition, invigorated by the principles, and guided by the precepts of the gospel, will be seen putting forth all its energies to diminish, as much as possible, the general mass of human wretchedness.

Miss Brisbane received the first rudiments of an education, suited to her prospects in life, under the paternal roof ; which was afterward matured and completed in that seat of every mental accomplishment, the city of Edinburgh. While she remained here, nothing particular occurred which has been recorded ; only, that she was remarkable for quickness of mind, a high sense of propriety of conduct, and a peculiar elevation of spirit. From Edinburgh she removed to London, for the purpose of being presented at court, and was thus introduced into the first circles of rank and fashion. During her stay in London, she lived with Lord and Lady Lothian, the marchioness of Lothian being her aunt. Her residence in the southern metropolis was, however, but for a short season ; the marchioness, who was a pious lady, was soon called to her reward ; and on this event, Miss B. returned to her native land. One circumstance, which occurred while she remained in London, and which often afterward affected her mind with wonder and joy, is worthy of being noticed. Being then about sixteen years of age, she went down to a small villa in the neighbourhood of London which belonged to her uncle.—While walking one day in the garden, the gardener, encouraged by her serious, interesting appearance, came up to her, and with all humility addressing her, stated the deep distress of soul under which he then laboured in consequence of sin ; and in effect inquired, “What must I do to be saved ?” The young lady was affected on witnessing his sorrow, and such directions and encouragements were given in the way of reply as were the means, under God, of leading the poor inquirer to a knowledge of the Saviour. He immediately exchanged the “spirit of heaviness” for “the garment of praise,” and went on his way exulting in the God of his salvation. Thus “out of the mouths of babes and sucklings God ordaineth strength ;” for this, as Lady M—used to observe, happened at a time when she was as ignorant of the truth, and of the meaning of the words she had employed, as the ground on which she stood.

Soon after her return from London, she entered into the marriage state with Sir Walter Maxwell, Bart., of Pollock.* This union was much to her mind, and seemed, for a time, to open wide fields of worldly enjoyment to her visionary fancy and

* The immediate ancestor of this great branch [the Maxwells of Pollock] of the most noble family of Nithsdale was Homerus de Maxwell, lord of Carlaverock ; who lived in the reigns of King Alexander the 2d and 3d. He married Mary, daughter and heiress of Roland de Mearnes, with whom he got a great accession to his estate in the west of Scotland,

aspiring hopes. But this vision of earthly bliss was soon ended, and appeared shorter than the last watch of the night. In little more than two years she was deprived of her husband by death; and in six weeks after, of her son and only child; and thus was left a widow at nineteen years of age. This painful dispensation of Providence, by which the Lord left no rival to dispute his claim to the sole empire of her affection, was sanctified by his grace to the salvation of her soul. For, finding by experience how soon those sources may be dried up, from which misjudging mortals calculate on drawing their earthly delights, Darcy Lady Maxwell's mind was thence led to seek its rest in God, making the Author of her being the fountain of her enjoyment. But as she was never known to mention her husband, nor yet her child, after their death; and as her conversion to God was closely connected with those events, to learn the particulars of that important change became a delicate subject of inquiry, and to which she would never advert but with reluctance and brevity. To her most intimate friend, she has been known to remark in one short sentence: "*God brought me to himself by afflictions!*" The following extract from her diary, as it affectingly alludes to those painful privations, and more fully illustrates the early stages of her religious experience than any other part of her writings, shall be here inserted, though not strictly in chronological order. It is dated—

"Sept. 3, 1772. This morning the Lord collected my thoughts, and fixed my mind in meditation upon his dealings with me ever since I was a child. And O, what abundant matter did I recollect, calculated to excite my wonder, gratitude, and love. How has he from my earliest days hedged up my path. When following the dictates of Satan and my own wicked heart, he, with a strong hand, yet by degrees, rescued me from the ways of the destroyer. He gradually enlightened my mind, showed me the evil of sin, and gave me ardent desires after *moral rectitude*. Then he caused the sun of prosperity to shine resplen-

viz., the lands or baronies of Mearns, Nether Pollock, Dryps, Calderwood, &c., &c.

Sir Walter Maxwell was the second son of John Maxwell, of Blanarhill, who, upon the death of Sir John Maxwell of Pollock, succeeded to his estate and honours, and was fourth baronet of Pollock.—*Vide Douglas' Baronage*, p. 450–452.

For the origin, grandeur, and antiquity of the great and illustrious name of Maxwell, *vide Douglas' Peerage*, p. 514.

The editor regrets that he has not been able to ascertain the exact dates of either her ladyship's birth or marriage. The records of the church at Largs were carefully searched by a friend, but no register of these events could be met with; owing, as it is supposed, to a volume of these records being either mislaid or lost. Calculating, however, from highly probable data, her ladyship appears to have been born about the year 1742—to have married in 1759—became a widow in 1761—and died in 1810, aged 68.

dent upon me, and gave me to taste of what the world calls happiness,—the possession of riches, honour, and pleasure. But he saw I could not bear this, and therefore, with a hand *graciously severe*, tore all from me, until the language of my poor heart, almost callous with reiterated strokes of his rod, was—

‘Fate, drop the curtain; I can lose no more.’

I did not then know that the thoughts of my God toward me, even in these dispensations of almost unmingled wo, were thoughts of peace, and not of evil. Having thus brought me into the wilderness, he spoke comfortably to me; drew me with the cords of love, with the bands of a man; taught me, as I could bear them, the lessons of his grace; he informed my judgment, but *first affected my heart*. Without this, I should have gone *heavily on*, if at all. The passions, under proper regulations, answer a noble end in religion. All the rational information and conviction the mind of man is capable of receiving, would, I think, effect but little without the aid of these warm auxiliaries. With me, the Lord made them mutually to assist each other; and by the effectual operations of his Holy Spirit upon both, clearly convinced me of my original pollution in consequence of Adam’s sin; and of my guilt, in consequence of my accumulated transgressions; whereby I must have remained for ever miserable, without a saving interest in Christ. Yet in this wretched state I had little, if any, of those dreadful terrors of hell and damnation which many experience. The Lord so tempered judgment with mercy, that I was rather *drawn* than *driven*; and generally was supported and often comforted, with hopes of obtaining all that was necessary for happiness. He gave me line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little; till, at last, having feared God for some years, the Sun of righteousness arose upon my soul with healing in his wings. He dispelled the cloud, removed condemnation, and for great bitterness gave sweet peace; ‘the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus made me free from the law of sin and death.’—And then, O my God,

“‘My chains fell, my heart was free,
I rose, went forth, and follow’d thee!’”

The latter part of this valuable extract anticipates a period in Lady Maxwell’s experience to which the reader has not as yet been gradually conducted; some intermediate stages may yet be traced. The passage is here adduced chiefly to show that it was in the school of painful bereavement she was first taught the comparative emptiness of all worldly good, and led to seek for a felicity at once pure, substantial, and permanent. Thus is Providence, in its varied events, rendered subservient to the purposes of grace, and one of the means of salvation:—thus are

our greatest trials proved to be but disguised blessings, and from the most deadly bitters in this world are extracted immortal sweets. By afflictions sanctified, the mind is humbled and the will bent; our strong grasp of the world is broken; the vanity of its enjoyments, and their insufficiency to meet the wants of the mind, are fully displayed. By afflictions the heart is often softened, and opened for the admission of truth, and disposed to seek a portion above. Seasons of affliction ought, therefore, to be improved, both in respect of ourselves and others—in the former, as affording a mean of getting good—and in the latter, as furnishing an advantageous season of being useful to others. For not Lady Maxwell only, but hundreds in the church militant, and thousands in the church triumphant say, “God brought me to himself by afflictions.” Nor because, in the first instance, God has not thundered into the soul terrific peals from Mount Horeb, shaking the heart like an earthquake; nor by the melting strains of Zion moved the rock to contrition, are we thence to question the reality of conviction of sin, nor the genuineness of conversion to God. For these afflictions are useful only as they drive or draw us to that gospel which is full of Christ, and hence is “the power of God unto salvation.”

It was while Lady Maxwell remained the child of sorrow, that she became acquainted with that part of the church of Christ with which she was afterward associated, and of which she remained a distinguished and useful member until she was united to the church of the first-born. The inducing circumstances which first led to this union are at present but indistinctly known; a few principal and well known facts may be mentioned. “The ministry of the Rev. John Wesley and of the Rev. George Whitefield was, at that time, generally approved in Scotland, and their congregations, wherever they went, were large and respectable. The ministers also in connection with the former had attained a degree of popularity, and were made the honoured instruments in the conversion of many souls. Nor were their acceptance and usefulness confined to the lower or middle classes of the community; for ministers of the Establishment and members of the university, persons of rank and title, were found mingled in their audiences. And it is probable that some of those pious nobles who were among the admirers of Wesley and Whitefield, were the instruments of first bringing Lady Maxwell to the Wesleyan chapel.”

But leaving what is only conjectural, it appears certain that she became personally acquainted with Mr. Wesley in the year 1764. At this early period a mutual attachment was formed, which continued steady and unabated until his spirit returned to God; and in its results, doubtless, tended in a measure to regulate her views, and to guide her determinations throughout the whole remainder of her life. On referring to Mr. Wesley's

journal, we find him preaching at Edinburgh, May 27th, of the above year, and after visiting Elgin, Aberdeen, and other places in the north, he returned to the metropolis on the 16th of June, and again preached to very large congregations, both on the Calton Hill, and in the high-school yard. (Wesley's Works, vol. iv, p. 179.) Four days after this, Mr. Wesley wrote to her ladyship the following letter, and a regular correspondence now commenced. As Mr. Wesley's letters (Wesley's Works, vol. vii, p. 15) tend to develope the state of her mind at this period, and contain important instruction, there need be no apology for the appearance of a few of them in this place.

"Newcastle-upon-Tyne, June 20, 1764.

"Will it be agreeable to my dear Lady Maxwell that I trouble her with a letter so soon? And that I write with so little ceremony? That I use no compliment, but all plainness of speech? If it be not, you must tell me so, and I shall know better how to speak for the time to come. Indeed it would be displeasing to me to use reserve: the regard I feel for you strongly inclines me to 'think aloud,' to tell you every thought which rises in my heart. I think God has taken unusual pains, so to speak, to make you a Christian: a Christian, indeed, (not in name,) worshipping God in spirit and in truth: having in you the mind that was in Christ, and walking as Christ also walked. He has given you affliction upon affliction; he has used every possible means to unhinge your soul from the things of earth, that it might fix on him alone. How far the design of his love has succeeded, I could not well judge from a short conversation. Your ladyship will therefore give me leave to inquire, Is the heaviness you frequently feel merely owing to weakness of body, and the loss of near relations? I will hope it is not. It might, indeed, at first spring from these outward pressures. But did not the gracious Spirit of God strike in and take occasion from these to convince you of sin, of unbelief, of the want of Christ? And is not the want of this one great cause, if not the greatest, of your present distress? If so the greatest danger is, either that you should stifle that conviction, not suffering yourself to be convinced that you are *all sin*, the chief of sinners; or, that you should heal the wound slightly, that you should rest before you *know* Christ is yours, before his Spirit witnesses with your spirit that you are a child of God. My dear lady, be not afraid to know yourself; yea, to know yourself as you are known. How soon then will you know your Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous! And why not this day? Why not this hour if you feel your want? I beseech the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ to look upon you now! O give thy servant power to believe; to see and feel how thou hast loved her! Now let her sink down into the arms of thy love, and say unto her soul, 'I am thy salvation'

"With regard to particular advices, I know not how far your ladyship would have me to proceed. I would not be backward to do any thing in my power; and yet I would not obtrude. But in any respect you may command, my dear lady, your ladyship's affectionate servant,
J. WESLEY."

The above letter appears to have been written at the request of Lady Maxwell. In her reply, she had evidently opened her mind to this eminent minister of Christ with frankness and candour. This produced the following, from which it may be safely inferred she had not yet attained redemption in the blood of Jesus; but saw her need, and was seeking for it with increasing ardour, though not perhaps in the way of simple faith.

"Manchester, July 10, 1764.

"MY DEAR LADY,—Till I had the pleasure of receiving yours, I was almost in doubt whether you would think it worth your while to write or not. So much the more I rejoiced when the doubt was removed in so agreeable a manner. I cannot but think of you often: I seem to see you just by me, panting after God, under the heavy pressure of bodily weakness and faintness, bereaved of your dearest relatives, convinced that you are a sinner, a debtor that has nothing to pay, and just ready to cry out,

'Jesus, now I've lost my all,
Let me on thy bosom fall.'

"Amen, Lord Jesus! Speak, for thy servant heareth! Speak thyself into her heart! Lift up the hands that hang down, and the feeble knees. Let her see thee full of grace and truth, and make her glad with the light of thy countenance!

"Do not stop, my dear lady, one moment, because you have not felt sorrow enough. Your friend above has felt enough of it for you:

'O Lamb of God, was ever pain,
Was ever love like thine.'

Look, look unto him, and be thou saved! He is not a God far off. He is now hovering over you with eyes of tenderness and love! Only believe. Then he turns your heaviness into joy. Do not think you are not humble enough, not contrite enough, not earnest enough. You are nothing: but Christ is all. And he is yours! The Lord God write it upon your heart, and take you for a habitation of God through the Spirit.

"O that you may be ever as dead to the world as you are now. I apprehend the greatest danger from that quarter. If you should be induced to seek happiness out of Christ, how soon would your good desires vanish! Especially, if you should give way to the temptation, to which your person, your youth, and your fortune will not fail to expose you. If you escape this snare I trust you will be a real Christian, having the power as well as the form

of religion. I expect you will then have likewise better health and spirits : perhaps to-morrow. But O, take Christ to-day ! I long to have you happy in him ! Surely few have a more earnest desire of your happiness than, my very dear lady, your ladyship's most affectionate servant,
J. WESLEY."

The nature and progress of Lady Maxwell's experience may be farther gathered from a covenant with God, into which she now entered, and afterward renewed at different times during a succession of years. The practice of covenanting with God must be acknowledged to be very ancient, and, as it has a scriptural warrant, a divine sanction, so its utility has frequently been proved both by individuals and collective bodies of Christians. That which is here copied is dated August 9th, 1764, and is as follows :—

"I am this day renewing a covenant made with God in January, 1762, but never written until now. Lord, help me in this great work. It is in the view of thy great strength *alone* that I am attempting it, being altogether unable in myself to vow unto thee or to perform. Yet I would, in obedience to thy command, lay hold on thy strength, that I may be able to make peace with thee ; and, blessed be thy great name, thou hast said that such shall make peace with thee. Isa. xxvii, 5. If thou, Lord, wilt manifest thy dear Son to me, clear up my evidence of my interest in him, shed abroad his love at all times in my heart, and let me feel him ever drawing me to himself with the cords of love, and with the bands of a man, and in times of trial make his strength perfect in my weakness, and not desert me in duty nor in temptation ; if thou, Lord, wilt do these great things for me, then, in thy strength, I give myself unto thee, soul, body, and spirit, in the bonds of an everlasting covenant never to be forgotten. Despairing in myself, I flee to the great refuge set before me, Jesus Christ the righteous, desiring to accept of him as my Prophet, my Priest, and my King. I give up my heart wholly to him, earnestly praying that he may empty it of sin and vanity, and fill it with his immortal Self, that he at all times may be the object of my warmest wishes. I engage, Lord, if thou wilt give me thy strength, ever to espouse thy cause and interest in the world, however it may be despised ; and to esteem thy reproach *more* than fine gold.

'No cross, no suffering I decline,
Only make my heart all thine !'

"But, Lord, if thou dost not *that*, I shall fall a prey to every temptation, and so perish ; for thou knowest the deceitfulness of my heart, and how hardened it is by sin, so that nothing but thy love can allure it. But, Lord, as thou art in Christ reconciling the world to thyself, I believe that in him thou art pure, universal love ; that thy tenderness to those who are seeking thee

through him is inconceivable ; therefore into that ocean of mercy I desire to plunge myself. O give me strong faith to lay hold on those precious promises which thou hast given, for divine teaching, pardon, and sanctification ; and now, Lord, I give myself and my resolutions into thy hand ; do thou make them good, and let none pluck them out of thy hand, that I may be thine in that day when thou makest up thy jewels.—Signed, Darcy Maxwell.”

‘The parents of Lady Maxwell were members of the Established Church of Scotland : a church which, for its approximation to Scripture in its constitution ; the learning, talents, and respectability of its ministers ; the extent of information on religious subjects among its members, and the general tone of doctrine held forth in it, *was*, in the opinion of Whitefield, and *is*, in the opinion of many equally unprejudiced and uninterested, the *best NATIONAL establishment* in the world. In this church Lady Maxwell had been educated ; in it she received much spiritual profit, from the stated labours of many pious and able ministers then resident in Edinburgh ; and continued occasionally to attend the ministry of the word, and regularly to communicate with its members, to the end of her life.” But she possessed a mind superior to party views or party distinctions : her soul was truly catholic. She soon began to distinguish between what is merely human in the varied *modes* of religion, and what is divine. To its circumstantials she was not indifferent, but she attached a paramount importance to what is essential. These enlarged and benevolent views led her to admire true piety wherever she found it, whether within or without the precincts of this or that particular denomination ; and to avail herself of every mean Providence held out to her for the attainment of this pearl of great price. And believing, after mature deliberation, that many additional means would be afforded her by forming a closer union with that body of Christians in connection with the Rev. John Wesley, she about this period became a regular member of his society. In doing this, she relinquished no privilege formerly enjoyed ; suffered no abatement of attachment to the establishment of her country ; but continued equally to revere and love whatever in it was excellent, and still to the utmost of her power afforded, “without partiality,” her countenance and aid for the furtherance of true religion in every varied department of the Church of Christ. On her informing Mr. Wesley of the important step she had taken, he sent her the following seasonable advice.

“ Sept. 22, 1764.

“MY DEAR LADY,—You need be under no manner of apprehension of writing too often to me. The more frequent your letters are, the more welcome they will be. When I have not heard from you for some time, I begin to be full of fears : I am

afraid either that your bodily weakness increases, or that your desires after God grow cold. I consider you are at present but a tender, sickly plant, easily hurt by any rough blast : but I trust this will not be so long : for you have a strong helper. And the Lord whom you serve, though feebly and imperfectly, will suddenly come to his temple. When, Lord ? Are all things ready now ? Here is the sinner : one whose mouth is stopped ; who has nothing to pay ; who pleads neither her own harmlessness, nor works, nor good desires, nor sincerity ; but can adopt that strange word,

‘ I give up every plea beside,
Lord, I am damn’d ; but thou hast died.’

He *has* died ; therefore you shall live, O do not *reason* against him ! Let him take you now ! Let him take you just as you are, and make you what is acceptable in his sight.

“ It gives me pleasure indeed to hear that God has given you resolution to join the society. Undoubtedly you will suffer reproach on the account, but it is the reproach of Christ. And you will have large amends, when the Spirit of glory and of God shall rest upon you. Yet I foresee a danger : at first you will be inclined to think that *all* the members of the society are in earnest ; and when you find that *some* are otherwise, (which will always be the case in so large a body of people,) then prejudice may easily steal in, and exceedingly weaken your soul. O beware of this rock of offence. When you *see* any thing amiss, (upon hearsay you will not readily receive it,) remember our Lord’s word, ‘ What is that to thee ? follow thou *me*.’ And I entreat you, do not regard the half Methodists, (if we must use the name.) Do not mind them who endeavour to hold Christ in one hand and the world in the other. I want you to be all a Christian ; such a Christian as the Marquis de Renty, or Gregory Lopez was ! Such a one as that saint of God, Jane Cooper ! All sweetness, all gentleness, all love ! Methinks you *are* just what she *was* when I saw her first. I shrink at the thought of seeing you what she was when I saw her last.* But why should I ? What is all the pain of one that is glorifying God in the fires, with ‘ Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit !’

“ May I not take upon me to give you one advice more ? be very wary how you contract new acquaintance. All, even sincere people, will not profit *you*. I should be pained at your conversing frequently with any but those who are of a deeply serious spirit, and who speak closely to the point. You need not condemn *them*, and yet you may say, ‘ This will not do for *me*.’

“ May He that loves you richly supply all your wants, and answer your enlarged desires ! So prays, my very dear lady,
“ Your affectionate servant, J. WESLEY.”

* An allusion to J. C—’s last illness. She died of the *smallpox*.—ED.

Her ladyship had not, as yet, commenced a regular diary, but wrote occasionally, when about to participate of the supper of her Lord. A few extracts from these, with Mr. Wesley's correspondence, will conduct us to the period when she was enabled to believe with her heart unto righteousness; and, consequently, obtained "peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

In March, 1765, she writes:—"In the view of the sacrament to-morrow, I feel an inclination, in the strength of God, to renew my former engagements to be the Lord's, being in some degree convinced that there is no *lasting* peace but in his favour, and no *solid* happiness but in his friendship; both of which I desire to believe. Blessed Lord, thou art in mercy offering salvation to a lost world, for the sake of thy dear Son, through whom *alone* I would presume to covenant with thee. He hath died, O God, and that is my only plea; reject me not, though in myself only fit for hell, but accept of me in the Beloved. O Jesus, undertake for me; make me thine in the bond of an everlasting covenant, for I give myself unto thee; incline my heart unto thee and thy ways, and O, seal me thine to-morrow at thy own table. I would give up my heart to thee, O take it, reign for ever in it, and subject all that is in me to thyself. In time of trial stand by me; sustain me in the path of duty, let me not start aside; fill me with love; and thine, and *only* thine, in thy strength I promise to be. Signed, D. M."

On the 23d of April of this year, Mr. Wesley again visited Edinburgh in his way to Ireland, and had a short interview with her ladyship. This afforded mutual satisfaction. He found her steadfast, humble, and contrite, but not yet in possession of peace. And it would seem, from the following letter, that his discriminating eye had detected in this young disciple the remains of a legal spirit. Though she herself might be unconscious of it, and certainly it was contrary to her creed, yet he feared she was in some measure depending on her own doings for acceptance with God. To this danger he was ever sensibly alive, and therefore seized an early opportunity to caution her ladyship against it, and to urge her to expect justifying mercy simply by faith, through the atoning merit of an all-sufficient Redeemer. Surely none who read the following epistles will continue either to think or to insinuate that this venerable minister of the gospel taught salvation by the deeds of the law.

"Londonderry, May 25, 1765.

"MY DEAR LADY,—It is not easy for me to express the satisfaction I received in the few hours I lately spent with you. Before I saw you, I had many fears concerning you, lest your concern for the one thing should be abated, lest your desires should be cooled, or your mind a little hurt, by any of the things which have lately occurred.* So much the greater was my joy when

* Mr. Wesley alludes to the republication of a certain work, which

all those fears were removed : when I found the same openness and sweetness as before, both in your spirit and conversation, and the same earnestness of desire after the only thing which deserves the whole strength of our affection. I believe tenderness and steadiness are seldom planted by nature in one spirit. But what is too hard for almighty grace ? This can give strength and softness together. This is able to fill your soul with all firmness, as well as with all gentleness. And hereunto are you called ; for nothing less than all the mind which was in Christ Jesus.

"It is with great pleasure that I observed your fixed resolution not to rest in any thing short of this. I know not why you should : why should you be content with being *half a Christian*, devoted partly to God and partly to the world, or more properly, to the devil ! Nay, but let us be *all for God* ! He has created the whole—our whole body, soul, and spirit. He that bought us has redeemed the whole : and let him take the purchase of his blood ! Let him sanctify the whole, that all we have and are may be a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving !

"I am not afraid of your being satisfied with less than this : but I am afraid of your seeking it the wrong way. Here is the danger, that you should seek it, not by faith, but, as it were by the works of the law. See how exactly the apostle speaks : you do not seek it *directly*, but *as it were* by works. I fear lest this should be your case, which might retard your receiving the blessing. Christ has died for *you* : he has bought pardon for *you*. Why should you not receive it *now* ? while you have this paper in your hand ? Because you have *not done* thus or thus ? See *your own works* ! Because you *are not* thus and thus ! More contrite ? More earnest ? More sincere ? See *your own righteousness* ! O let it all go ! None but Christ ! None but Christ ! And if *he alone* is sufficient—if what he has *suffered* and *done*—if his blood and righteousness are enough, they are *nigh thee* ; in thy mouth and in thy heart ! See, all things are ready ! Do not wait for this or that *preparation*. For something to *bring* to God ! Bring Christ—rather, let him bring *you*. Bring you home to God ! Lord Jesus, take her ! Take her and all her sins ! Take her, *as she is* ! Take her *now* ! Arise, why tarriest thou ! Wash away her sins ! Sprinkle her with thy blood ! Let her sink down into the arms of thy love, and cry out, My Lord and my God !

"Let me hear from you as soon as you can. You do not know how great a satisfaction this is to, my dear lady,

"Your ever affectionate servant, J. WESLEY.

"Be pleased to direct to the New Room, in Dublin."

about this period excited much idle and unprofitable speculation. In his journal he writes, April 23, of this year, "I preached at Dunbar about noon, and in the evening at Edinburgh. My coming was quite seasonable, (though unexpected,) as those bad letters, published in the name of Mr. Hervey, and reprinted here by Mr. John Erskine, had made a great deal of noise."—*Wesley's Works*, vol. iv, p. 200.

"Kilkenny, July 5, 1765.

"MY DEAR LADY,—As yours was sent from Dublin to Cork, and back again hither, I did not receive it till yesterday. I am now setting my face again toward England: but I expect to be in Dublin till the beginning of next month, and then to cross over, so as to be at Manchester (if it please God) about the beginning of August. Either at Dublin or at Manchester I hope to have the pleasure of hearing from you. This is indeed a pleasure, as it is to write to you; though sometimes I do this with fear: a fear lest I should give you any pain, as I know the tenderness of your spirit. I wish I could be of some service to you: that I could encourage you to cast yourself on Him that loves you: that is *now* waiting to pour his peace into your heart, to give you an entrance into the holiest by his blood. See him, see him! Full of grace and truth! Full of grace and truth for thee! I do not doubt but he is gradually working in you: but I want you to experience likewise an instantaneous work: then shall the gradual go on swiftly. Lord, speak! thy servant heareth! Say thou, 'Let there be light!' and there shall be light. Now let it spring up in your heart!

"It may be, He that does all things well has wise reasons, though not apparent to us, for working more gradually in you than he has done of late years in most others. It may please him to give you the consciousness of his favour, the conviction that you are accepted through the Beloved, by almost insensible degrees, like the dawning of the day. And it is all one how it began, so you but walk in the light. Be this given in an instant or by degrees, hold it fast. Christ is yours: he hath loved *you*: he hath given himself for *you*! Therefore you shall be holy as he is holy, both in heart and in all manner of conversation.

"Give me leave, my dear friend, to add a word likewise concerning your bodily health. You should in any wise give yourself all the air and exercise that you can. And I should advise you, (even though long custom made it difficult, if that were the case,) to sleep as early as possible, never later than ten, in order to rise as early as health will permit. The having good spirits, so called, or the contrary, very much depends on this. I believe medicines will do you little service: you need only proper diet, exact regularity, and constant exercise, with the blessing of God.

"Your speaking or writing was never tedious to me yet; and I am persuaded never will be. Your letters are more and more agreeable to, my very dear lady,

"Your most affectionate servant,

"J. WESLEY."

August 10th, of this year, Lady Maxwell again wrote as follows:—"Having, by the kind providence of God, a prospect of

going to the sacrament to-morrow, I would, in the strength of the Lord, renew my engagements to be his. He has sustained me until now, and still is, I trust, drawing me after him. Gracious God, let me not be disobedient to the heavenly voice, but with my *whole* heart may I ever seek thee. O Jesus, undertake for me; to thee I would desire to give myself up in time and in eternity. Set me as a seal upon thy heart, and let me experience *all* thy fulness. I again subscribe with my hand unto the Lord, and give myself up; accept of me for Christ's sake, and seal me to-morrow.

“DARCY MAXWELL.”

The latter end of this year Mr. Wesley again addressed her, and seems to caution her against some dangers to which he knew her ladyship was exposed.

“*London, Dec. 1, 1765.*”

“MY DEAR LADY—Perhaps there is scarce any child of man that is not at some time a little touched by prejudice, so far at least as to be troubled, though not wounded. But it does not hurt, unless it fixes upon the mind. It is not strength of understanding which can prevent this. The heart, which otherwise suffers most by it, makes the resistance which only is effectual. I cannot easily be prejudiced against any person whom I tenderly love, till that love declines. So long, therefore, as our affection is preserved by watchfulness, and prayer to Him that gave it, prejudice must stand at a distance. Another excellent defence against it is openness. I admire *you* upon this account. You dare (in spite of that strange reserve which so prevails in North Britain) speak the naked sentiments of your heart. I hope my dear friend will never do otherwise. In simplicity and godly sincerity, the very reverse of worldly wisdom, have all your conversation in the world.

“Have you received a gleam of light from above, a spark of faith? O let it not go. Hold fast, by his grace, that earnest of your inheritance. Come just as you are, and come boldly, to the throne of grace. You need not delay. Even now the bowels of Jesus Christ yearn over you. What have you to do with *to-morrow*? I love you to-day. And how much more does he love you! He

‘Pities still his wandering sheep,
Longs to bring you to his fold!’

To-day hear his voice, the voice of Him that speaks as never man spake: the voice that raises the dead, that calls the things which are not as though they were. Hark! What says he now? ‘Fear not! only believe! Woman, thy sins are forgiven thee: go in peace: thy faith hath made thee whole.’ Indeed I am, my dear lady,

“Your ever affectionate servant, JOHN WESLEY.”

In this state of mind Lady Maxwell continued, with little variation, during the two following years. She scrupulously examined every step of her progress, and was extremely jealous lest she should err. Fear and hope alternately prevailed. Her desires, however, continued ardent, and her determination to live to God remained unaltered. She had likewise become zealous in the cause of religion, and was deeply affected when any thing occurred calculated to stain its purity, or to lead the unwary to question its reality. Something of this nature had happened in Edinburgh, which led her ladyship to state the matter to Mr. Wesley. This drew from him the following reply:—

“Newcastle-upon-Tyne, May 6, 1766.

“MY DEAR LADY,—It was well that I did not hear any thing of a trial you lately had, till it was past. You have great reason to bless God that this did not turn you out of the way. You might very easily have inferred from it that ‘all these people are alike;’ and thence have given way to a thousand reasonings, which would have brought you into utter darkness. But it is plain you are not left to your own weakness. You have a strong helper. The Lord stands on your right hand, therefore you are not moved. And I make no doubt that he will continue to help, till his arm bring you salvation. But, in the meantime, you have need of patience; and the more so, because you have a weak body. This, one may expect, will frequently press down the soul; especially till you are strong in faith. But how soon may that be, seeing it is the gift, yea, and the free gift, of God? Therefore it is never far off. The word is nigh thee! ‘Only believe!’ Look unto Jesus! Be thou saved! Receive out of his fulness grace upon grace; mercy, and grace to keep mercy.

“On the 24th instant I hope to be at Edinburgh, with my wife and daughter. But perhaps you will see the salvation of God before you see, my dear lady,

“Your ever affectionate servant,

“J. WESLEY.”

During the year of 1767, Lady Maxwell appears to have suffered much from bodily indisposition: this might be partly occasioned by the exercises of her mind; but her constitution, ever since the death of her husband, had been extremely delicate. All that is necessary to throw light on her religious progress this year will be found in the following letter, and in two extracts from her papers. These shall be given in the order of their dates.

“Norwich, Feb. 23, 1767.

“MY DEAR LADY,—For a considerable time I was under apprehensions that you were in a state of temptation. And as I had no other way of helping you, this put me upon commending you the more frequently to Him that is able to save you. Your last, therefore, was doubly acceptable to me, as it relieved me from my fears concerning you, and gave me the occasion of

rejoicing over one for whom I have the most sincere and tender affection. Sure it is that the grace of God is sufficient for you, in this and in every trying hour. So you have happily experienced it to be already : and so, I trust, you will experience to the end. But you must not imagine that you are yet out of the reach of temptation : thoughts will be suggested again and again : so that you have still need to be

‘ For ever standing on your guard,
And watching unto prayer.’

And let my dear friend keep at the utmost distance from temptation, and carefully shun all occasions of evil. O it is a good, though painful fight ! You find you are not sent a warfare at your own cost. You have Him with you, who can have compassion on your infirmities ; who remembers you are but dust ; and who, at the same time, has all power in heaven and earth, and so is able to save you to the uttermost. Exercise, especially as the spring comes on, will be of greater service to your health than a hundred medicines : and I know not whether it will not be restored in a larger measure than for many years, when the peace of God fixes in your heart. Is it far off ? Do not think so ! His ear is not heavy ! He *now* hears the cry of your heart !—And will he not answer ? Why not to-day ? Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly ! Your openness obliges me to be more than ever, my dear lady, your affectionate friend and servant,

JOHN WESLEY.”

“ March 14, 1767. Having a view of going to the Lord’s table to-day, though distressed in mind and weak in body, and without those comfortable views which I formerly had ; yet, being convinced that *without God I must* be miserable, and knowing that there is no access to him but through the Son of his love, I desire, in *his* strength, to give myself up to him. Lord, make me more willing ; remove what hinders ; make this surrender effectual ; and ratify it in heaven, for Christ’s sake. O give me to profit more by the ordinance than formerly : Lord, draw me, and I will run after thee : O quicken me, and I will call upon thee ; and make me, O Jesus, thine in time and for ever. D. M.”

“ October. The Lord in mercy having spared me until now, and as he is now giving me another opportunity of going to his Son’s table, and having been very merciful to me since I was last there, I would here record his goodness ; take shame and confusion to myself for past unfaithfulness, and renew my engagements to be his for ever. O God, thou hast been good ; to thee be endless praise ! Upon mature deliberation, I still see it my *greatest* honour, and desire it as my *highest privilege*, to be *devoted* to God ; and therefore, in thy strength, O Jehovah, in thy name, O Jesus, I again cheerfully desire

to give myself to the Lord, soul, body, and spirit, for time and eternity. O let it be effectual; and to-morrow, at thy table, shine upon me, and give me power to live more to thee than hitherto, for Christ's sake. D. M."

And now the day of her redemption drew near. The vision had tarried, but she had also waited for it. She had long gone on her way weeping, bearing precious seed; now she returns, bringing her sheaves with her. The horizon had been dark, and at times cheerless; but the overhanging cloud of condemnation passeth away, being dissipated by the glorious Sun of righteousness: servile fear gives place to filial love; faith lays hold of the atonement, and her heart is filled with joy and gladness;—or, to speak in Scripture language, a language which nothing but barefaced infidelity will attempt either to deride or explain away, "Being justified by faith, *she* had peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ," and "rejoiced in hope of the glory of God." This happy change (alluded to in a former extract) she has stated in the following explicit and circumstantial manner:—

"April 4, 1768. For some weeks the Lord had more than ever given me to see my great wretchedness by nature, and had written *tekel* upon all I had done or could do. This greatly distressed me; I knew not which way to turn. My foes were increasing, and, to my apprehension, my strength weakening. I thought God dealt hardly with me; my carnal mind boiled in enmity against him. I was impatient and fretful,—the terrors of hell often took hold of me, and the fears of death were strong. I sunk down, and a cloud overshadowed me. My reason was utterly unable to assist me; nay, I seemed to be denied the use of it so as to be able to draw any rational conclusion respecting my state. To heighten my distress, I was in a sea of temptation: it seemed a critical time; either God must help or I perish. In great mercy he did send me some help, by the prayer and conversation of one of his servants; who, among other things, told me the Lord was humbling me previous to deliverance. I obtained a degree of relief from what he said, and, in the evening, was much profited under his sermon from Isaiah xxxv, 3, 'Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees.' Two days after, Providence brought to my hand *The Experience of a Good Man*. The part I read treated of faith. By this means I obtained a view of faith which, in a good measure, agreed with another account I had read a few days before. But I could not *then* receive it; *now* I was brought to acquiesce, and in a measure led to the exercise described by the writer, and determined to wait the issue. I mean, believing in Christ, with a degree of persuasion that he would appear in my behalf. On the following Sabbath I went to church, and prayed to God that, if what had passed in my soul was from himself, he would give me some token of it. Mr. Webster lectured on Acts

xvi, 17. I was disappointed ; but during his sermon from the 31st verse, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved,' the power of God was present, and I received a measure of faith I had not formerly possessed. I was made to see Christ as entirely suited to me ; my *understanding*, *will*, and *affections* were wrought upon : I was made *willing* to accept Christ with his *cross* : to believe he would give me *all* I stood in need of, and finish what concerned me. I was glad for the consolation, and held him fast all day, still expecting a greater manifestation. In the afternoon Dr. Erskine preached from, 'Ye that love the Lord, hate evil.' Among other things, these words came with power, 'Behold, thou art made whole ; sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.' At night, by plausible reasoning, Satan almost robbed me of all, but I again got power to look to Jesus, and found my cure. On Monday and Tuesday I still held fast the beginning of my confidence. On Tuesday night I was constrained to praise God for his goodness, for, though in company, I found much peace, my anchor being fixed. Wednesday, Thursday, and till Friday evening, it cost me hard struggling. I saw my great wretchedness, felt my own emptiness, and had almost given up my hold, concluding I had given way to what had displeased the Lord. Friday night, the subject preached upon was 'Christ manifested in the flesh to take away our sins.' This, through the day, I had been praying to *feel*. During the sermon I was variously agitated ; now hoping, and again driven back, because I did not feel power to relinquish all ; and still feared I had done wrong ; but before the sermon was concluded my mind was cheered, and my hope increased ; and on coming home, my peace began to flow as a river. I was astonished :—knew not what to make of it, and was afraid of delusion. Having been so long inured to distress, I started back at joy, and thought it could not be for me. I again prayed to God, that if this happy change was wrought by him, it might continue, and I be enabled to walk worthy of it ; but if from the enemy, it might be taken away ; as I would rather choose sorrow from himself, than be allowed to deceive myself. Still it continued. I was afraid to go to rest, lest I should lose the enjoyment ; and all that day, I cannot express what I felt. All condemnation was removed, I could not help believing, being so sweetly constrained to it. I was much inclined to silence, prayer, and meditation. A sense of divine love preserved in me a calm composure of spirit : it seemed all 'a sacred awe that dares not move.' My heart was made to say, 'I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, that ye stir not up nor awake my love till he please.' On the Sabbath following, Mr. Plenderleith lectured on Gal. v, 1, 'Stand fast, therefore, in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.' I found it suitable, and was blessed.

He preached on 1 Thess. iii, 3. I prayed to the Lord that he would again set his seal to the work, and show me clearly if he had given me saving faith; and while the minister was describing a true faith, the Lord, in great condescension, gave me *his Spirit to witness with mine* that he had bestowed upon me that precious gift. I felt it clear, full, and satisfactory, far beyond all human evidence. Between sermons I found my mind hurt, and a degree of condemnation which terrified me. In the afternoon, under Mr. Webster, the Lord again spoke peace to me, and I was restored. Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, I had peace, and a measure of love. On Thursday, at Leith, being the fast day, Mr. Walker preached from Heb. xiii, 9, 'It is a good thing that the heart be established with grace.' Again the Lord witnessed to the work, and I was made happy; but at night a great storm was raised, and I was afraid I should lose all. I was astonished I could not love God more; was in misery, and very nearly gave up my confidence. On Saturday I heard a sermon from Heb. xii, 24: but I was not very lively. All that night I had power to believe, but could not obtain that gale of heavenly affections I desired to enjoy. On Sunday morning I was indisposed in body, and not much alive in my soul; but grew better, and the Lord abundantly blessed my provision, though, in the act of communicating I was not a little disappointed, as my expectations were great: but all day I had sweet peace in believing. To-day Mr. Johnson* preached from Luke xxi, 40, 'And when he was at the place, he said unto them, Pray that ye enter not into temptation.' I received it as sent unto me, and perceived my danger, my need, and also my safety, namely, in prayer and looking to Jesus. O praises, eternal praises, be ascribed to my God.

'Now I have found the ground wherein
 Sure my soul's anchor may remain:
 The wounds of Jesus for my sin,
 Before the world's foundation slain;
 Whose mercy shall unshaken stay,
 When heaven and earth are fled away.'"

* The Rev. Messrs. Webster, Erskine, Plenderleith, Walker, and Johnson were pious and able ministers in the Established Church of Scotland. They evidently stood high in the esteem of her ladyship; and from them, under God, she received substantial benefit. How remarkably apposite to the state of her mind were the passages spoken from on this eventful occasion! He who sends by whom he will send, can direct his faithful servants in their selection of subjects, and by their instrumentality communicate seasonable consolation to the soul that seeks him. There is a pensive pleasure attending the recollection of the labours of such men. "Our fathers, where are they? the prophets, do they live for ever?"

CHAPTER II.

PARTICULARS INTENDED TO ILLUSTRATE ALLUSIONS IN THE DIARY AND CORRESPONDENCE.

Lady Maxwell's love of retirement—From her youth and elevated rank exposed to temptation and danger—Relinquishes her gay acquaintances—Connection with Lady Glenorchy—They differ in religious sentiment, but continue united in affection—Account of Lady H. Hope—The manner in which Lady Maxwell spent her time—Her love to the means of grace—Constant thirst for full salvation.

FROM the date of the last extract Lady Maxwell's diary commences ; and little more will be found necessary for a full development of her heart and life, than to follow with attention her own copious and unreserved statements. By daily self-inspection, by a habit of turning her eye inward, of watching the movements of her affections, of analyzing her feelings, and attending to the bias of her will ; she attained to a power of discrimination in the important science of self-knowledge, very rarely possessed. Hence it is believed that the enlightened and discerning Christian will find, in the following record of her experience, clearness, accuracy, and precision. But as her ladyship has only noticed outward occurrences, so far as they had an influence on her mind and heart, allusions to different circumstances will be frequently met with on which a few explanations will be deemed desirable. The following particulars may be here premised, calculated to throw light on different parts of the diary and correspondence.

"From the time Lady Maxwell became a widow, she resided in Edinburgh or its vicinity ; from which, however, as will be seen, she made occasional excursions to the south. But ever after her conversion to God, retirement from the busy scenes of the world was most congenial to her habits and pursuits. In the northern metropolis she had her daily walks of benevolence, seeking to relieve misery in all its varied forms : in name and character she was well known to an enlarged circle of religious friends ; yet, as a person figuring on the stage of the world, or as exercising authority in the church, she was not known. Her influence became great, and her usefulness extensive ; but it was silent, gentle, and unobtrusive as the fall of the evening dew. Confined by choice to her native country, from which she seldom moved but when business called or health demanded, and then but for a short time, she lived in retired privacy, secluded from the gay and busy world. Being easy in her temporal circumstances, select and happy in her acquaintances, her path through life was generally even and her sky serene, presenting few, if any, of those varieties which are to be found in the lives of the principal actors on the stage of this world ; or of those whose path is checkered with every variety of light and shade, their horizon having experienced every vicissitude between the cloudless noon of prosperity and the starless midnight of adversity.

Her life had a sameness, the sameness of matured, established piety, a blessed monotony of being, and getting, and doing good." This will in some degree account for a paucity of incident in the following diary which, in the estimation of some persons, might otherwise have been invested with an additional interest; but which need not be greatly regretted by those whose principal view in reading is the improvement of the heart.

Lady Maxwell was frequently the subject of severe conflicts; the grand adversary diversifying his mode of attack according to her age, experience, and circumstances. When she first entered the field of her spiritual warfare she was comparatively but a stripling; and from her elevated rank must have been exposed to imminent danger. If religion be at all times amiable and attractive, it is peculiarly so in the youthful disciple. It is here that it obtains its noblest conquests. When, through its sanctifying influence, we see the ardour and impetuosity of youthful passions kept within proper limits, and directed to noble pursuits; the vain blandishments of the world despised that the consolations which flow from the *cross* may be secured;—when we see the rich and honourable in early life, "choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season," we have indeed a convincing proof of the efficacy of grace, and are constrained to acknowledge that the gospel is "the power of God unto salvation." It was in the spring time of her days that Lady Maxwell gave her heart wholly to God. Being then in the bloom of youth, favoured with a person cast in nature's finest mould, possessed of a mind superior both in its kind and culture, each capable of raising admiration and commanding esteem; it is not to be wondered at that she had to grapple with temptations from the world, or that, in prosecuting her determination to follow Christ, she was daily called to deny herself and to take up her cross. The above qualities of body and mind procured her also various solicitations again to enter into the marriage state; by which she might have formed an alliance with the first families in the empire, and considerably elevated her rank; but whether from obedience to the apostolic injunction, "Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers," or on account of other reasons which cannot now be known, she never, except with regard to one offer, and that for a short season, entertained a thought of the kind. As her time and her talents, so were her person and affections offered a willing sacrifice to God: nor can there be a doubt that she ever indulged a temptation to revoke the surrender thus willingly made. In the contemplation of the divine perfections as displayed in creation, providence, and redemption, in the possession of her God, and in recommending to others the Redeemer of men, she found all that was necessary to give suitable employment to the energies of her mind, and to gratify the pure, and elevated, and enlarged desires of her heart.

“ But if religion opens a source of pleasure, at once pure and varied, rich and inexhaustible,—adapted to human society in all its varieties, and to human life amid all its vicissitudes,—so it likewise presents its *difficulties*. It has not indeed yet been proved that these are more numerous, or more formidable, than those which are met in any other pursuit, whether of knowledge, fame, wealth, or pleasure : and generally speaking, the Christian’s difficulties gradually diminish as he proceeds on his way. As passion is overcome and controlled by grace,—the affections deadened to earthly good ; as the will becomes accustomed placidly to submit to, and cheerfully to enter into the will of God, and the mind formed to virtuous habits ; as the rugged asperities of nature are filed off by the power of the Spirit, and smoothed to patience, long suffering, gentleness, and contentment,—difficulties are found to be duties, and duties are relished with delight ; crosses form crowns, and temporal loss conduces to spiritual and eternal gain. Thus, as the Christian advances in the divine life, and in proportion to his advance his way becomes more smooth, the sky of his prospects brightens and extends, and the thorns of difficulty and opposition are deprived of their painful sharpness.

“ Lady Maxwell’s religion did not subject her to much opposition, though its connection with a particular body of Christians very early called into exercise her spirit of sacrifice. She suffered the loss of many things which had ranked high in her estimation ; but she accounted them as dross, for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ. It could not be expected that *many* of her own rank would court her society, and among those who withdrew themselves were her early associates, and principal friends. Yet losses like these she scarcely felt, and perhaps never deplored. There were, however, at that time in Scotland *some*, though ‘ not many noble,’ whose minds God had illuminated, and whose hearts his transforming hand had touched, who esteemed vital Christianity their highest honour, and made the cross of Christ the supreme object of their glory. Among these may be reckoned the late Viscountess Glenorchy. The piety of this lady was considerable, her usefulness great, her zeal for orthodoxy standing at a high temperature ; and her attachment to Lady Maxwell was strong, sincere, and unaltered, in life and in death. And yet, such is the frailty of human nature, this friendship had its alloy, which occasioned both parties sincere sorrow.

“ Wilhelmina Maxwell,* afterward Lady Glenorchy, was youngest daughter of Dr. William Maxwell, Esq., of Preston, in Dumfriesshire, and sister to the countess of Sutherland. She

* Dr. William Maxwell died four months before the birth of this daughter ; and his widow, afterward the venerable Lady *Alva*, wishing to perpetuate the name of a husband so dear, called the fatherless child Wilhelmina.—*Dr. Gibbon’s Mem. of Eminently Pious Women*, vol. ii, p. 264.

was early married to John, Lord Viscount Glenorchy, only son of the late earl of Breadalbane, whose death, soon after, left her a very young widow. 'Her understanding (says her biographer, the late Rev. Dr. Gillies of Glasgow) was naturally strong, and her memory retentive. Her mind was polished by a liberal education, and richly furnished by extensive reading and observation. Her person was agreeable, her manners engaging, her fancy brilliant, and attended by a constant flow of good humour.' But, though 'fitted to shine in courts,' being visited by sickness in her twenty-third year, she upon recovery resolved to prefer devotion and utility to gayety and thoughtlessness; and her conduct through life afterward proved that her faith was not fruitless of good works. Her private charities were indeed numberless, and great part of them unknown. To some ministers, whose congregations were not affluent, she paid regular salaries; to others, occasional donations; and to many others, stated annuities. Beside the elegant chapel at Edinburgh, which cost about £6000, and which bears her name, she built and endowed a church at Strathfillan, in Perthshire; and purchased chapels at Matlock, in Derbyshire; at Carlisle, at Workington, and at Newton Burhill, in Devonshire; beside contributing, along with Lady Henrietta Hope, to the erection of Hope Chapel at Bristol. This excellent lady died at Edinburgh, July 17th, 1786, leaving £5000 to the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge; £5000 for educating young men for the ministry in England; and most of the rest of her fortune, which was considerable, to other pious and charitable uses.* Such a remarkable similarity in the rank and situation of these two ladies,—their personal endowments, and mental accomplishments,—the manner in which a wise Providence had treated them,—and the means which sovereign grace had employed to save them, were so simultaneous as seemed sufficient to draw them together as by reciprocal attraction, and blend their congenial souls in one.

"But, although in feeling, affection, and pursuits, they remained one, the harmony of sentiment was soon broken, and on certain subjects they ceased to see eye to eye. The Viscountess Glenorchy, for a considerable time, was an intimate friend of the Rev. John Wesley, one of his greatest admirers, and regularly attended the ministry of the preachers in connection with him, at the Wesleyan chapel in Edinburgh. But on the republication of Mr. Hervey's letters,† accompanied by a preface written in the true spirit of a dogmatical and angry controvertist, a general suspicion was excited against what was called the unsoundness of Mr. Wesley's principles. It was then that Lady Glenorchy, along with some other persons of distinction, began to view Mr. Wesley as a teacher of heterodox opinions, and under that view

* Encyclop. Perthen., art. Maxwell. † See note, p. 21.

withdrew from him their countenance. They went farther, and a powerful and determined opposition was set up. And it certainly cannot now be denied that if *that* system of doctrines, which has in this country, it is presumed proudly and exclusively, arrogated to itself the imposing appellation of *orthodoxy*, be right, Mr. Wesley and his adherents have all along, even from the beginning, been decidedly in the wrong. If Calvin and Whitefield taught nothing but the *infallible truth* as it is in Jesus, a host of most distinguished divines, as well as Wesley and Fletcher, have erred from that truth. But these are points on which the learned and pious still see cause to differ: there are, however, some favourable indications that they are learning more and more to avoid questions which gender strife, and to contend principally for those essential doctrines in which all, who hold the head, cordially agree.*

"On these controverted subjects, Lady Maxwell thought for herself; and all who know the character and strength of her thinking powers, the degree in which her mind was furnished with whatever might aid its natural energies in its search after truth; the calm, the close, the dispassionate way in which she applied her mind to investigate any subject of importance; all such persons will not hesitate in allowing that she was quite as competent to judge and to decide as any other of her rank; and will believe that she acted conscientiously, and from conviction, in the formation of her religious creed. And, notwithstanding she had to subdue the almost invincible prejudices of education and country, she was led firmly to believe that the inspired volume teaches, in the unsophisticated sense of the terms, that 'God is loving to *every* man,' 'and would have *all* men saved;' that 'the righteous may turn from his righteousness, and die in sin,' and that 'the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from *all* sin.' But, though she differed in sentiment from Lady Glenorchy, and some others of her early religious acquaintance, which at times occasioned painful exercises of mind, there was

* The following remarks, by an eminent Scotch divine are worthy of attention:—

"Is this thing which you call orthodoxy a thing in which mankind are universally agreed, insomuch that it would seem to be entitled to the privilege of an axiom, or first principle to be assumed without proof? Quite the reverse. There is nothing about which men have been, and still are, more divided. It has been accounted orthodox divinity in one age, which hath been branded as ridiculous fanaticism in the next. It is at this day deemed the perfection of orthodoxy in one country, which in an adjacent country is looked upon as damnable heresy. Nay, in the same country hath not every sect a standard of their own? Accordingly, when any person seriously uses the word, before we can understand his meaning, we must know to what communion he belongs. When that is known, we comprehend it perfectly. By the orthodox, he means always those who agree in opinion with him and his party, and by the heterodox those who differ from him."—*Campbell's Lec. on Sys. Theology*, p. 114.

no interruption of religious friendship, nor the smallest diminution of Christian affection. Like the two champions of that day in the field of controversy, they went hand in hand, as far as they could; and when they could go no farther, without a dereliction of principle, they kindly agreed to differ. In fact, Lady Maxwell occupied such a respectable situation, both for sense and piety, that her eloquence and influence were often highly serviceable in defending the doctrines of Mr. Wesley and his ministers; and also in removing much bitter prejudice from the minds of those persons who either had not, or would not have, any other means of learning the truth. With respect to Lady Glenorchy, such was the estimate in which she held Lady Maxwell, that at her death we find her appointing Lady M. her sole executrix, and the principal manager of her chapels, both in England and Scotland. This appointment, as will be seen, devolved on her ladyship much painful solicitude; but it also led her into an extensive field of usefulness, and furnished her with many sources of satisfaction and joy. Her call to this work she steadfastly believed was the call of God: and, though she often deplored the small success which attended some of these religious institutions, with a scrupulous conscientiousness she carried into effect every tittle of Lady Glenorchy's will. There is, however, reason to believe that the anxiety to which she was hereby subjected, and the additional labour which it imposed upon her, had, in her latter days, an unfavourable effect on her declining health, and in all probability tended to accelerate her death."

Another of Lady Maxwell's most intimate friends and correspondents was Lady Henrietta Hope, third daughter of John, earl of Hopetown. This excellent lady was remarkably formed for eminence. Her understanding was clear and strong, and her judgment sound. By reading, conversation, deep thought, and observation, she greatly improved her intellectual powers; and in early life afforded pleasing promise, should she survive to mature years, of being useful and ornamental to society. The expectations so fondly entertained by her relatives and friends were not disappointed. She manifested the "nicest moral sense;" possessed a heart formed for friendship; had a keen sensibility of human pain, with an unceasing desire to relieve, or at least alleviate, in every possible way, the varied distresses of her fellow creatures. Such an amiable and benevolent disposition secured for her the warm attachment of all around where she resided. She was indeed beloved by all who had the happiness of her acquaintance. This affection, from superiors and inferiors, is a circumstance always honourable, and rendered peculiarly so in some situations.

"Yet, though favoured with a mind thus enriched with every virtue of the moral character, united to the most lovely disposi-

tions and engaging manners, it was not till her twenty-fifth year that Lady Henrietta Hope began to inquire about the great realities of eternity. At that time an impression concerning the one thing needful was made upon her mind, which never after was effaced. Her own words upon this subject, at that memorable period, are, 'O to grace how great a debtor! Called at first out of nothing; and, after twenty-five years' obstinacy and rebellion, awakened from a state of sin, misery, and death, and brought to the light of the glorious gospel, to the knowledge of Jesus Christ revealed therein, and (though by slow degrees, through various mazes, manifold temptations, and sundry trials, may I not, in all humility, say) to good hopes through grace. How shall I praise the riches of that grace which has abounded toward me.'"

"Being thus brought from darkness to light, and her mind relieved from anxiety respecting her own state, the language of her heart was that of the royal psalmist: 'What shall I render unto the Lord?' Believing it her duty, and viewing it as her privilege, she made an entire dedication of herself, with all she had or ever should stand possessed of, to that great and gracious Being who had dealt so bountifully with her. Nor did she ever breathe a wish to recall the solemn deed; no, the residue of her life, by its uniform tenor, proved the sacrifice not only sincere but universal, in so far as her situation would permit." (Gibbon's Mem., vol. ii, p. 260.)

The particular circumstances which, under God, led to this important change in Lady Hope, have not been noticed by her biographer; but the nature of the correspondence between her and Lady Maxwell renders it highly probable that Lady M. was the honoured instrument employed by the great Head of the church in bringing Lady Hope to a knowledge of God her Saviour. The former invariably addresses the latter as her "*dear daughter*," and frequently subscribes herself, "*Your affectionate parent in the gospel*." Between these illustrious individuals there existed no jar of sentiment; but possessing a oneness of soul, a congeniality of feeling, they entered cordially into each other's views, and greatly assisted each other in their benevolent purposes. Lady Maxwell was, perhaps, more formed for action than her pious companion; she therefore had the principal management of their varied charities; but Lady Hope, whose humility, "almost to excess," kept her much from public view, was, as it respects advice and pecuniary aid, one of her most steady and powerful auxiliaries. Lady Hope evidently considered Lady Maxwell as her spiritual adviser, and therefore laid open to her, with the most unreserved freedom, the diversified exercises of her mind: and in the replies of the latter there will be observed a solicitude, a tenderness, and affection truly maternal and Christian. So intimate and endeared was this friendship,

that, for several years, few days were permitted to elapse without some interchange of expressions of mutual esteem.*

Such were two of the illustrious companions of Lady Maxwell; but she had learned also to condescend to persons of low estate. She had in Edinburgh other intimate religious friends, with whom she used statedly to commune on the deep things of God; and these, though eminently pious, were principally selected from the humbler walks in life. Her correspondents also became numerous; a few of these will be noticed afterward. But the manner in which her ladyship spent her time may be here detailed, as tending greatly to illustrate many of her allusions. "She had always, especially after the death of Lady Glenorchy, much business on her hands, and had as much writing as might have employed a private secretary: but as she rose early, applied herself closely, and did every thing by rule, she lived and did much in a very short time, and was able to despatch the whole with her own hand. During the former part of her life she rose at four o'clock, certainly a very unfashionable hour, and attended preaching in the Wesleyan chapel at five, (morning preaching being usual at that time,) but at a later period she did not rise quite so early. The time between rising and breakfast was spent in devotional exercises. She breakfasted in her earlier days at seven, afterward at eight o'clock; after which she discharged the duties of the head of a family, in the character of a priest, in her own house. From eleven till twelve was spent in intercession with God for her friends, the church, and the world; and the intervening time was devoted to reading, writing, exercise, and the performance of acts of benevolence to such as might require it. She generally retired to her closet before dinner, and again as soon after dinner as was at all convenient. The evenings, when she was alone, were spent in reading, chiefly divinity; and after an early supper she again committed her family into the kind keeping of that great Shepherd who never sleeps; and then, having spent some time in praising the God of all her known and unknown mercies, she retired to rest in full assurance of eternal salvation, should she never see the light of another day. The history of one day of her *domestic* life may be considered as a fair specimen of every day, excepting the Sabbath, and her more special acts of devotion on every returning *Friday*. This day was conscientiously set apart for the exercise of abstinence, as she could bear it; for the duties of impartial examination, humiliation, and renewed dedication of herself to God: and, in the latter part of her life, it was on this day she took a retrospect of the week, in order to record the exercises of her mind, and to enumerate the blessings she had received during that period. Generally, while thus engaged, she

* For particulars respecting the death of these two eminent and pious ladies, see p. 232.

had "times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord," which made any interruption, except from evident calls to other necessary duty, irksome and unpleasant. In this manner for the space of nearly fifty years :

" Her virtues walk'd their [daily] round ;
Nor made a pause, nor left a void ;
And sure the eternal Master found,
His [various] talents well employ'd."

As she walked with God in her own dwelling, so her heart loved the very gates of Zion ; and she showed this love by attending the house of the Lord, to the latest period of her life, whenever health would permit. She regularly attended the morning and evening sermon in the Wesleyan chapel on the Sabbath day, until declining health limited her attendance to the morning in winter. She occasionally went to her parish church, (St. Cuthbert's, or West Kirk,) and constantly on sacramental occasions. On the Monday evenings she was present at the public prayer meeting in the chapel, afterward attended at the band meeting, at which she always spoke with great freedom, whether the individuals present were many or few, poor or rich ; and she always made it a point to speak at every love-feast which she attended. When nothing extraordinary prevented, the preachers in Edinburgh visited her ladyship on the Thursday in every week, on which occasion she met in *class* along with the preachers, and such other religious persons as were frequently present on those days, for the twofold purpose of enjoying the privilege of meeting in class, and of sharing the company and conversation of her ladyship. These were very solemn occasions. It was here, in a very peculiar manner, that the clearness and extent of her views of divine things appeared, and the lustre of the Christian graces shone. Here was perceived the depth of her humility, the strength of her faith, the vigour of her hope, the fervour of her love, and the ardour of her zeal. Here it appeared how dead she was to the world, how far she was saved from *self*, and how entirely she was losing herself in the will of God : there was no appearance of *ecstatic rapture*, but a deep serenity of mind, a constancy of peace, and an inexpressible fulness of love. The Rev. Duncan M'Allum, who had known her ladyship nearly thirty years, when referring to those occasions, observes, "The place was wont to be filled with the presence of God, and we breathed a heavenly atmosphere. Our hearts burned within us, as she talked to us. I remember not, in my long pilgrimage, to have enjoyed equal pleasure in the conversation of any Christian as in hers ; and I should look backward with *regret*, if I could not look forward with *hope*."

"Immediately after the meeting, she gave to the preachers, to pay into the hands of the respective treasurers, her usual con-

tributions for the poor, and the support of the gospel ; and then proceeded to inquire after the success attending their labours ; the state of religion in each place in the circuit ; how the classes in general were attended ; and whether the work of God was prosperous in the connexion at large : and in these inquiries she seldom lost sight of the sick poor of the flock. In company, and at table, she gave every subject of conversation a pious and profitable turn, that all present might be benefited. And as on these occasions some young female relations were frequently present, for whose spiritual good she was deeply solicitous, she particularly suited the topic of conversation to their state and feelings ; dwelling most frequently on the pleasantness of religion, and the doubtfulness of all piety which was not accompanied with a scriptural assurance of acceptance with God."

From the time Lady Maxwell obtained justifying mercy, she deeply felt the necessity of full salvation from sin, while she clearly saw that such a salvation is a privilege graciously exhibited in the gospel of Christ : and as she believed that the meritorious fountain of the Saviour's blood was opened, as well for all uncleanness of heart and nature, as for guilt on the conscience—that divine faithfulness and justice were equally pledged to cleanse the believer from all unrighteousness, as to forgive the penitent his sins—that grace could reign until an end was made of iniquity, and the heart filled with the perfect love of God ; so it will be found, that with an ardent, uniform pursuit of soul she followed after, that she might be saved as fully as a fallen creature, wearing a body of flesh and blood, and dwelling in a world of temptation, could be saved ; that her body and soul and spirit might be wholly sanctified to God. And as her Christian course is pursued, guided by the clew of her own diary and correspondence, it will be seen that she attained to a constant assurance of sanctifying grace. After this happy period, it will appear that her strains of praise rose gradually in the scale to notes more exalted and more divine, until her triumphant spirit took its flight, to unite with the choirs above in singing praises to Him who had loved her, and washed her from her sins in his blood. There were, indeed, in her experience, moments of mental depression, but not of unbelief ; there was a deep consciousness of shortcoming, but no condemnation on account of backsliding. Her religion had its *varieties*, but these were the varieties of *advance* ; the blade shooting into the stalk, then the ear, and the ear gradually receiving the golden colouring of maturity and ripeness : her inward experience had its changes, but these changes were only those of the glorious rising morn, which shineth brighter and brighter to the perfect day.

CHAPTER III.—1767.

Advantages of autobiography—Lady Maxwell's diary.

AFTER the preceding observations, Lady Maxwell shall be chiefly her own biographer. As none but God and herself could know the varied exercises of her mind and heart, so no pen but her own could have ever described them. Others might tell of what she said, and of what she did; but she will relate what she thought and what she felt—what were the causes of her sorrows, and from whence arose her joys: she will unfold the motives which gave life and energy to her actions, and describe the might by which she was enabled to perform them: she will tell of her hopes and fears, her inward conflicts and spiritual conquests; and give many an important lesson to those who are seeking for “glory, immortality, and eternal life.”

April 25. All the last week the Lord has been exceedingly gracious to me, giving me peace in believing, and at times joy. O the delightful moments I have experienced! I have found Jesus a most satisfying portion; but have been humbled before God, from a deep conviction of my want of conformity to him. I am ready to think none ever experienced so much of his goodness, who did not feel more of the transforming influence of grace. I am earnestly desirous to have my heart adorned with every fruit of the Holy Spirit, and my life with every virtue of the Christian character, that God may be glorified in me. I now see, in a different manner than what I formerly did, that all the mercies I enjoy, from a cup of cold water to the salvation of my soul, have been purchased by the Redeemer. This endears him to me. He is my all in all.

July 14. The Lord is still merciful, and though often provoked, has not yet forsaken me. I still, through mercy, hold fast my confidence, though not at all times alike strong. I have generally a persuasion that I shall overcome. The Lord has given me precious promises on which he has caused me to hope; and I daily look for their accomplishment. With the apostle I am enabled in some measure to forget, “those things which are behind, and reach forth to those things which are before:” and at times am so animated with the hopes of complete victory that nothing seems to intimidate: but there are also seasons when, through the power of corruption, the strength of temptation, and a sense of a thousand evils which still cleave to me, I am weighed down, and am ready to sink. But He who is rich in mercy knows what I am able to bear, and proportions my sufferings to my strength. At present I perceive no object worthy my pursuit, but the will of God; *that* is indeed precious. I earnestly desire to know it, and to walk in it; but for want of

power, and at times of inclination, I suffer keen anguish. Lord God, perfect what thou hast begun.

September 16. My soul is restlessly pursuing God, with a deep sense of the emptiness of all created good : without much sensible enjoyment, but with great desire and expectation : and, through mercy, my anchor is fixed, and Jesus in some small measure is my "wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption."

—, Sunday 19. To-day the Lord humbled me by a sight and sense of my natural wretchedness ; I was almost a terror to myself. At night my distress increased, and my soul was in an agony. I seemed stripped of all. I had no doubt of my adoption, yet the conflict was great ; Satan raged mightily, but the Lord sustained me. When I thought of yielding, a secret voice seemed to encourage me to fight manfully. I was convinced that the Lord would not suffer me to be tried above what I was able to bear, and I happily found it so. Jesus drew nigh and strengthened me, but rather with *sustaining* than with *comforting* grace. He rebuked Satan, and in some measure I hope I came off victorious ; yet in every situation I see danger. When most alive to God, I am most sensible of the hinderances I meet with from others, and am prone to grow fretful and impatient :—again, when I obtain victory over my enemies, then I feel a tendency to spiritual pride, which terrifies me. But must I slacken my pursuit of divine things because of this ? No, I endeavour to fly to the blood of sprinkling, and cry to Jesus.

October 8. For some days the Lord has been teaching me that in nothing am I to seek happiness but in himself :—to *use* other things, but to *enjoy* him. It is a difficult lesson. Without much grace and constant watchfulness, how natural is it to sink, at least in a measure, into the creature. O how much has the Lord to do in me ! May I prove his utmost power to save ! I am at a loss how to tell of his goodness ; it is so great, nothing exceeds it but my unfaithfulness. The pains he is taking to make me meet for an inheritance among the saints in light, is astonishing. I sensibly find him giving me all the comfort I can bear. When low and depressed, he raises me up ; and when in danger of spiritual pride, he sends something which proves a proper ballast. He truly does all things well. What cause have I to praise him for all that is past, and to trust him for all that is to come.

Nov. 23. Was much hindered in prayer this morning by wandering thoughts. This is a besetting evil of mine ; but in family prayer, my mind was more composed. I often feel more freedom from wanderings when praying with others than when alone. Promised myself much profit from visiting a Christian friend who is confined by sickness, especially as at first I found it a cross. When with her, I experienced such an insatiable

desire after God—such an aching void within—such a keen conviction of the emptiness of all created good, as more and more convinced me, I shall never enjoy that fulness my soul demands but in God.

“Come, O my God, thyself reveal,
Fill all this mighty void ;
Thou only canst my spirit fill,
Come, O my God, my God !”

In prayer, I felt a power and sweetness which fully compensated me for taking up the cross. In the evening, I enjoyed a tranquillity of mind, a sweet repose in the blood and bosom of Jesus. I wished much to profit others and myself with pious conversation, but they seemed determined to trifle. Through grace, I did not catch their spirit, though this is not always the case. When they left me, after some time spent in ministering to the sick, I went to prayer, and felt what I am not able to express ; such a sinking into God as I hope one day constantly to enjoy. All around me seemed God :—eternity was at hand. I tasted the good word of God, and felt the powers of the world to come.

Dec. 26. My joy was not so great to-day as usual. It was a calm peace, my mind was stayed on God. But toward evening, being with those who were not deeply serious, a degree of trifling and lightness of spirit hurt me, and disturbed that frame I should wish always to enjoy ; I mean that state of mind arising from a deep consciousness of the presence of God. My heart was taking an undue complacency in the creature, and this seldom fails to injure. When I retired, the Lord was exceedingly gracious, but this only served to give a pungency to my distress. Shall I never be able to give God my whole heart ? At times, I think I do ; but, being deceitful, it again insensibly departs from him. At other times, I see my danger, am on my guard, and overcome. I feel the frowns of the world not near so dangerous as its smiles. How narrow the path that God marks out for those who would truly walk with him ; but, though strait, it is safe and sweet in proportion. It is only when I step out of that I feel distress.

— 31. Upon a review of the great goodness of God to me in the course of this year, I feel gratitude and love spring up even in my hard heart. O how unspeakably gracious has been the Father of mercies ! I attempted to spend the evening and night in meditation, prayer, and thanksgiving, both in public and private, and found it comfortable and strengthening. O when shall every thought be brought into captivity ?

CHAPTER IV.—1769.

Lady Maxwell's diary continued.

Jan. 1, Sunday. I was very early and late engaged with God to-day, but could not obtain that heavenly gale I wished. The want of food and sleep had in some measure stupified my mind, but, in the morning, a sermon from "Trust ye in the Lord for ever," comforted and strengthened me; and in the afternoon another from "All are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's," excited in my heart gratitude and love to him who had done so much for me. In the evening, while at prayer, I felt desirous of devoting myself wholly to God, and attempted to renew the dedication of all my powers to him. O, that it may be more effectual than ever, and that through grace I may be enabled this year to adorn the gospel of God my Saviour in all things!

— 16. My mind was dull this morning, but the Lord soon after quickened me; drew near and surrounded me with his presence; shone upon my soul, and in his light I clearly saw my own state, and spiritual objects in general. May the Lord make me faithful to the light he imparts; I have much for which to answer. He clearly marks out the narrow path in which he would have me to walk; shows me the most excellent way, but hitherto I have been exceedingly perverse. O Lord, let the time past suffice, and do thou magnify thy mercy above all thy name, in continuing to bear with me until I can all things do. My soul felt earnestly desirous this day to glorify God; to embrace every opportunity for doing good which might offer, and he graciously afforded me several, which I endeavoured to improve. The issue I leave with him. I find it hardly possible to retain the Spirit of God, to preserve a clear sense of his pardoning love alive in my soul, without being constantly employed in what has a tendency to glorify him, and to profit my fellow creatures. We may retain a fallacious hope that we enjoy the remission of sins, but our souls will not be alive to God; at least, this accords with my experience. In proportion as I grow remiss in attempting to act for God or my neighbour, my spiritual senses flatten, my perception of invisible things becomes dim;—on the other hand, I seldom, if ever, embrace any opportunity of doing good, but it brings into my soul an additional degree of strength and comfort. But, alas! how dull have I been in learning this important lesson, and how reluctant am I often to reduce it to practice. Sometimes overcome by a false modesty; at others, a degree of langour, which overspreads my soul, and renders me inactive. Against this last evil, I find constant watchfulness necessary.

Feb. 22. Since my last date (January 22) grief has obstructed

my writing, and I should scarcely now resume my pen, but that I find a record of my experience highly profitable. I have felt, and do still feel much, on account of the death of a dear friend. A sword has pierced through my soul in this dispensation; and yet I have felt such an acquiescence in the will of God as I cannot easily express. I have great cause to adore his condescension for the solace I enjoy, from a conviction that my departed friend is happy,—unutterably happy. Through abounding mercy, for some time past I have been on the stretch for God. Eternity has appeared very near. I feel in a good measure disunited from created things:—my spirit pants for everlasting rest, and struggles into God: my confidence in his pardoning mercy grows stronger, and my love to him is on the increase, with a stronger desire than ever to go hence, and to be with Christ, which is far better. Words cannot express the ardent desire which I feel to be entirely devoted to God: to walk with him as Enoch; to cleave to him with Caleb's spirit; and I trust to see the happy day. Yet while I thus write, I am the subject of keen distress on account of my latent depravity; my unprofitableness, unfaithfulness, and ingratitude in the midst of such amazing goodness. Lord, help: Lord, forgive!

March 14. For some time I have been confined with sickness. How gracious is that God I so feebly serve: he prepared me for this trial by causing his consolations to abound in my soul. In the former stages of this indisposition my peace flowed as a river, and death was not only deprived of his sting, but even seemed to wear a pleasing form. As the disease gained ground I was not so lively; distress of body seldom fails to depress my spirits. After suffering awhile, the Lord has graciously raised me up again; may it be to glorify him! To-day he has blessed me with fervent desires after a higher enjoyment of the divine presence, and has given me an animating view of the land that is afar off. O my God, hear the cries of one on whom thou hast had mercy, and prepare my heart to receive whatever Christ has purchased for me: allow me not to rest short of it:—put thou a thorn in every enjoyment, a worm in every gourd, that would either prevent my being wholly thine, or in any measure retard my progress in the divine life.

May 6. Found, this morning, my soul sweetly conscious of her union with Jesus, and seemed in prayer and meditation to be sinking into him. Was tried in a tender point this forenoon, but found, through grace, power to give up my own will. I looked to the Lord, and felt that if his will took place, however contrary to my own, I should be perfectly satisfied. Being in company to-day with some persons who were not serious, I was in danger of sinking into lightness of spirit; and though God heard my prayer, and enabled me in a measure to confess him, I was not so collected and deeply serious as I wished. What a

privilege to be with those who are truly alive to God. How dangerous the spirit of the world: though seemingly innocent, yet, alas, how it unbends the mind, and prevents the full stretch of the heart after God. How shall I praise thee, O my Lord, that I am not obliged to dwell with such triflers? Great are my privileges: may I gratefully enjoy, and diligently improve them to thy glory.*

— 28. Felt languid this morning, partly owing to the body, which often weighs me down. Each day witnesseth my ardent desires to live more to God than ever; but, alas! every returning night brings the painful conviction of a practice which bears comparatively but a small proportion to these desires. O when shall my life and conversation testify that I dwell in God, and God in me! Lord, fulfil thy promises! Felt desirous of doing something for God to-day, but had not the opportunities which I expected. Since I came hither, I have made many attempts, but as yet have seen little fruit; yet so gracious is my Lord, that, upon my doing what he convinces me is my duty, he affords me comfort, for the most part, independent of success. O for a heart burning with love to his name; with zeal for his glory; and a power each moment to do and suffer his will! This is my highest ambition; were ten thousand worlds put in competition, how would I spurn them from me. At times this week I felt strong touches of the love of God and Christ: happy presages, I hope, of the flame to be one day enkindled in my soul, never to be extinguished, but to burn brighter and brighter until it mingles with the full blaze of eternal day. If not deceived, I feel my desires stronger and more abiding for the glory of God; for an entire devotedness of heart and life to him; and also more fervent wishes to bring others to the knowledge and love of the Saviour. This produces more power to act for God, and to confess him, than formerly; accompanied with a constant fear lest I should see him dishonoured by others. Whenever I do see this, it pierces me to the quick; on the contrary, when I perceive him acknowledged, it gives me a heartfelt joy.

June 3. Was not remarkably alive to-day, but at night enjoyed sweet peace. In the course of the day, I found it a difficult task to reprove a person who had spoken amiss. A fear of giving offence often proves a snare. We should desire to please all, so far as we can consistently with their edification: but when this desire prevents our being faithful to them, it becomes a serious evil; of which, alas! I am often guilty. Lord, pardon me.

— 12. Have been mostly confined by bodily affliction since last date, and during that time my exercises of mind have been various. At seasons I was most earnestly desirous to be

* On the 8th of this month, Lady Maxwell left Edinburgh to visit some relatives at a distance, and did not return until July following.

devoted to God, and enjoyed the strongest breathings for power to do and suffer his will, as my heaven: this while, Jesus was precious, and seemed nigh; but as I grew worse in body, my fears of death became painful. I also feared some severe and perhaps tedious illness was approaching, and felt not fully resigned. Christ, in my apprehension, drew near to strengthen me; and though by faith I saw him, and did not doubt of my interest in him, this did not overcome my fearfulness. This is an evil I have long groaned under; Lord, remove it, and give me that faith which

“—————pain and death defies,
Most vig'rous when the body dies.”

In the time of sickness, I always appear to myself to lose ground: my natural spirits grow very flat, and I seem to sink from God. One reason for this may be, my complaints are chiefly of a nervous kind. This last illness has doubled my cries for entire resignation to the will of God: then all shall be alike welcome; but as yet I almost tremble at bodily distress, from what I have hitherto suffered. O my God, hear my prayer, disappoint my fears, and enable me in every situation to say cordially, “Thy will be done.”

— 20. Possessed power to fix the eye of my soul upon Jesus, and enjoyed some recollection of mind, with an earnest desire for more, yet was frequently interrupted. Was convinced I had several times through the day spoken more words than were necessary. O for an entire victory over this unruly member. Wanderings also distress me: *imagination*, justly termed the fool of the house, is indeed an ungovernable faculty. How unprofitable the train of thought into which it often leads me! My soul longs to have every movement of my mind brought into subjection.

— 21. This has been a day of suffering. O that it may be for the farther purification of my soul! The fiery darts of the wicked one have been shot at me with fury; yet, blessed be the Author of all my mercies, he does not suffer the fiercest of my foes to rob me of my confidence; though often, through anguish of soul, I do not derive that comfort from it which I otherwise might. The manner of Satan is, to darken, or at least to divert our eyes from the bright prospect, to fix them on the present pressure, which he fails not to make as heavy as infinite Wisdom permits. To-day he has sought to prevail by endeavouring to harass me with apprehensions of coming evil; and by suggesting that I should not be able to endure, so as to glorify God; that his promises would fail; that he would leave me to the power of my enemies; and that I should dishonour him, discourage others, and fall into despair myself. But when in the hottest of the battle I looked up to the Lord, endeavoured to examine the ground of my fears, and they vanished into smoke.

A secret persuasion filled my heart that the Saviour would fulfil his promises, and that what I now suffered was to prepare me for greater things than I had yet seen. Indeed I have ever found that "pain is the parent, wo the womb of sound important good." A high veneration for the will of God causes me in every circumstance to cry earnestly for power to say, "Thy will be done." This I would constantly prefer to a removal of trials, being fully assured my happiness does not depend on an exemption from distress, but in an unlimited resignation to Him who is boundless love and infinite wisdom. He knows, as it respects measure, weight, and duration, what "best for each will prove." O my God, strengthen me, for I am weak as helpless infancy! Thou, who knowest my heart; thou, who canst not be deceived, even to thee, in the day of suffering, can I not appeal? The desires I have to be wholly devoted to thee,—the sweet morsels thou hast enabled me to refuse, that I might accomplish it more fully,—the inviting enjoyments which lead even many of thy own children captive, and which surely of myself I could not have withstood, yet oftener than once have been refused for thee,—with what I have again and again suffered before I attained my present state, are all, I humbly trust, evidences of my sincerity. And after all, can it be that I should fall short of the prize I have in view, *entire devotion of heart and life to thee*? Forbid it, O my God, and do "exceeding abundantly above all I can ask or think."

August 8. The Lord, who is continually loading me with his benefits, has twice this day remarkably interfered in my behalf. Surely he gives his angels charge concerning his people. Though I am poor and needy, he thinketh on me. In the evening he preserved me from broken bones, to which I was exposed by a fall: a few hours after, when walking home from the chapel, I witnessed a most melancholy scene, occasioned by the falling in of the North Bridge.* I had passed over this bridge about four hours before, and was within less than five minutes of passing over it again, when, almost in a moment, the greatest noise I ever heard (except on a similar occasion, when I was as remarkably preserved) filled the air. It seemed as if the pillars of

* The architect of this bridge was Mr. William Mylne, who agreed with the town council of Edinburgh to finish the work for 10,140*l.* and to uphold it for ten years. It was also to have been finished before Martinmas, 1769; but, on the 8th of August that year, when the work was nearly completed, the vaults and side walls on the south fell down, and nine people were buried in the ruins, and many more hurt. This misfortune was occasioned by the foundation having been laid, not upon the solid earth, but upon the rubbish of the houses which had long before been built on the north of High-street, and which had been thrown out into the hollow to the northward. Beside this deficiency in the foundation, an immense load of earth, which had been laid over the vaults and arches, in order to raise the bridge to a proper level, had no doubt contributed to produce the catastrophe above mentioned.—*Enc. Perth., art. Edin.* § 17.

nature were giving way. Instantly the cry resounded,—“The bridge is fallen.” Amazement and fear sat on every countenance, each one dreading his own loss. The Lord preserved me in some measure composed, and my views were clear. O how precious did I feel Christ to my soul, and eternity appeared to open to my view. The sensation of gratitude was so powerful as almost to overcome me. The interposition of Providence was so conspicuous, and I felt so unworthy of it, that I was overwhelmed with astonishment. Gratitude and love to God my Saviour, who appeared nigh, flowed into my soul so as to render me almost unable to speak: indeed my thoughts were too big for utterance. On the first opportunity, I endeavoured to make a new surrender of that life so graciously preserved to him who was so well entitled to it. I had often done this before, but here was a fresh call. O my God, grant that this new obligation may produce greater devotion of heart and life to thee.

Sept. 7. Was not well in body, but the Lord made me joyful in his house of prayer. Mr. W—— preached on 1st John iii, 2, “Beloved, now are we the sons of God,” &c. He enlarged on the privileges of God’s children, and mentioned several outward marks by which we might examine whether we were his people. The Lord made me sweetly sensible of his work on my soul. I feel grateful, also, that by *the witness in myself*, he constantly assures me of my interest in his blood, without having recourse to these marks: yet these, at the same time, are corroborative evidences which cannot be overlooked without danger. Was soon after in company, and, though with serious people, and conversing on serious subjects, my spirits were hurried. I am often sensible of intemperance both in speaking and thinking. Frequently, I suffer inconvenience from the latter when writing. Thought flows so plentifully into my mind, that I lose one half before I can properly arrange the remainder; and from this cause sometimes do not write at all. The former also is a snare in conversation, causing me to speak much more than, upon reflection, I perceive I ought to have done. What I want is a constant self-recollection: the eye of my soul ever fixed upon Christ. Lord, give me this blessing, and enable me to stand perfect and complete in thy whole will!

Oct. 13. Since last date (Sept. 9) I have been in continual motion, having travelled above five hundred miles in search of health to soul and body. I ardently longed for an increase of the divine life, and hoped the journey would contribute toward it, as I enjoyed several opportunities of seeing and conversing with many happy Christians, and had much to remark of the goodness of God to myself. One interposition in my favour I hope never to forget. At one particular place he greatly revived my soul, uncommonly strengthened my faith in the promises, and opened my mouth to speak for him in a manner that,

knowing my natural shyness of temper, makes me astonished. But when he commands, power is given to obey. Yet, upon a retrospective view of this journey, I see much cause to blush and be ashamed. I feel as much contrition of heart on account of sin, and the total depravity of my nature, as ever I felt in my life. O my God, "wash my foul heart and make it clean."

— 20. Have been sinking deeper in the knowledge of myself than formerly. With the prophet of old, I have been led from one chamber of imagery to another, and made to mourn for the secret abominations therein discovered. Had there not been joined to this painful discovery a deep sense of the mercy of God in Christ, my spirit would have failed before him. But, while he sits as a refiner's fire upon my soul, he supports me by the consolations of his Spirit. In spite of my inward distress, this last week has been a most comfortable one. The word in public proved very strengthening; the work in my own soul sweetly according with it, while the Spirit of God clearly witnessed to both. I also enjoyed, especially in the Methodist chapel under sermons on Tuesday and Thursday night, an inexplicable consciousness of my union with Jesus, a oneness with him that is better felt than expressed.

Dec. 9. Found more power to-day in reproving sin than usual. I find it almost the hardest task I have, fearing lest people should imagine I do it from a self-righteous principle; but this, unless my heart deceive me, is certainly not the motive by which I am actuated. Nothing could make me do it but the strongest conviction of duty, and an ardent desire to do the whole will of God. There is, I acknowledge, another motive which helps to determine me;—a desire to be free from distress, and to enjoy comfort. The latter I seldom fail to obtain when I obey; the former I am sure to feel if I refuse. Yet I am positive the glory of God is with me the most powerful stimulative to duty, and has ever been so, since he gave his Spirit to witness with my spirit, that I belong to him: but of late this has sensibly increased.

— 29. Have endeavoured to do the will of God to-day, but have not had so much comfort in it as usual. Yet I desire to persist, and through grace to press vigorously on, in spite of all opposition, that I may at last obtain the glorious prize of uninterrupted communion with God here, and eternal glory hereafter. Often does he own my labours, by comforting, supporting, and animating my soul, and by filling me with an insatiable desire for power to be entirely devoted to him. The road to this, I know, is by endeavouring to be faithful to the light already imparted; by believing constantly on Christ with a lively faith; a faith always working by love and purifying the heart. Faith, genuine faith, is of a very active nature, leading its possessors continually to desire to be employed for the glory of God, and

the good of mankind ; and, therefore, they endeavour to embrace every opportunity for either which may offer ; nay, they will even seek for opportunities. O how does my heart pant to feel more of the transforming power of grace !

— 31. This being the last day of the year, I endeavoured to spend some special time with God at night, and had the comfort to find, upon examination, I had, upon the whole, made some small progress in his ways ; especially in zeal for his glory ; in power to act for him ; in desires after entire devotion, and also in faith and love. O how numberless have his mercies been to me in the course of the last twelve months : how graciously and tenderly, and also bountifully, has he dealt with me ! In some of his dispensations toward me his mercy has been so great, his love so astonishing, as no language can adequately describe. While meditating upon them, I have often been “lost in wonder, love, and praise.” O my God, what am I that thou shouldst deal thus with me ? What shall I render unto thee ?

“Take my body, spirit, soul,
Only thou possess the whole.”

Maintain what thou hast wrought in me, and still keep me through faith, until thou hast fulfilled in me all the good pleasure of thy goodness.

CHAPTER V.—1770.

Lady Maxwell establishes a school at Edinburgh—Retires to Saughton-hall—Has the gospel preached in her house—Diary continued.

It was on the second of July in this year, that Lady Maxwell established a school in Edinburgh for the purpose of affording education and Christian instruction to poor children. The necessity of impressing the minds of the rising generation with scriptural truth was not, at the period alluded to, so deeply and extensively felt as at present. But her ladyship was fully alive to its vast importance, and her benevolence was not to be confined within the limits of common and every-day charities. As her heart devised liberal things, so she was studious to find out new methods of usefulness, and her exertions could only be bounded by her abilities. This school was ever after one of the objects of her pious solicitude. Its sole management and superintendence remained with herself ; but as the benefits flowing from it were seen and acknowledged, others came forward with pecuniary aid. Her ladyship was particularly careful to admit none as masters but men of undoubted piety ; frequently examined the children with regard to their improvement in knowledge and seriousness ; and, in a great number of cases, she was favoured with pleasing indi-

cations that a truly religious concern had been excited in their youthful minds. She has also recorded several instances of permanent good ;—of persons who afforded, in mature life, decided evidence of established piety, and who gratefully acknowledged that their first religious impressions were received at this school. A few, after they had been absent from their native country a number of years, returned to offer their kind benefactress their tribute of thanks. But all the good that has been, and which yet may be done by this institution, will not be fully known until the grave gives up its dead. Each child, unless dismissed on account of improper conduct, went through a regular course of instruction for three years ; and at the expiration of that period a Bible was presented, to be their guide and companion through life. At the time of Lady Maxwell's death, eight hundred children had enjoyed all the benefits of this very laudable charity. and it is still in active operation ; her ladyship having, by her will, made provision for its existence so long as time shall last. May its energies never be diminished !

But in her endeavours to " save souls from death," she did not confine herself to the rising generation. Other barren fields needing cultivation soon presented themselves, and she entered upon the work with a pleasing alacrity. Having suffered much, for some time, from bodily indisposition, and hoping that a residence in the country might be beneficial to her health, she removed for a short period to Saughton-hall, a venerable mansion at a small distance from Edinburgh. On witnessing among the villagers a prevailing carelessness with regard to religion, she became deeply interested for their spiritual welfare. That she might convey to them religious instruction, and if possible awaken them from their dangerous slumbers, she opened her house, in person invited them to attend, and engaged different ministers to preach unto them the unsearchable riches of Christ. Many gladly flocked to hear, and evidence was afforded that these labours of love were succeeded by the divine blessing. This, however, to some appeared irregular, and opposition was excited. " Let all things be done decently and in order," is certainly a divine injunction ; and there are some individuals who appear to think that to attempt to promote religion, or even to make any allusion to it, except under some consecrated dome, is a violation of this precept. Happily for some of those villagers, Lady Maxwell thought differently, braved the opposition, persevered in her benevolent efforts, and had to rejoice in the work of her hands. To this practice she steadily adhered through life, whenever she was called to reside in the country. Were the rich and noble of our land to follow her ladyship's example, and give their influence and energies to the support and extension of godliness, many an ignorant population would enjoy the means of more efficient instruction, and many a poor wanderer would be led into

the way of peace. Frequent allusions to these interesting particulars will occur in the course of the diary.

January 1. This day should have been given especially to the Lord, being the first of the year; but He who cannot err saw meet to confine me to bed with pain and sickness. I could hardly fix my mind on any subject for five minutes together; perhaps a chastisement for former evils, and surely deserved. I see more and more the propriety, or rather necessity, of making religion our chief business while in the enjoyment of health. How soon does disease disorder, at least partially, the faculties of the mind; thereby rendering us unable to draw at times even any rational conclusion, with regard to the state of our souls:

“‘Live while you live,’ the sacred penman cries,
‘And give to God each moment as it flies.’”

How reasonable; Lord, enable me so to do!

— 4. Had this evening the benefit of some hours, conversation with a sensible clergyman; in the whole course of which I think a catholic and moderate spirit prevailed. Would we be preserved from bigotry, how necessary is it to accustom ourselves to think and speak on every subject, especially on religion, with a liberal and generous freedom. Contending earnestly for fundamentals, while we cheerfully allow others to differ from us in doubtful opinions, and this without a diminution of love to them. Unquestionably we shall enjoy the greatest union of spirit with those whose sentiments are in all things similar to our own; but we are also bound to love those who differ from us, as members of the same body, as living branches of the same vine.

O my God, let this heavenly temper prevail in me; deliver me entirely from narrowness of spirit, from contracted views, and enable me with a pure heart fervently to love all that love the Lord Jesus in truth. I cannot help being entirely of the opinion expressed by an author I lately read; that “no damnable error can dwell in a soul united by a living faith to Christ;” but, at the same time, I believe the hay and stubble of many foolish opinions, built on that good foundation, will be burned in the day of the Lord, while the soul that had imbibed them will be saved.

Feb. 9. This has been a day of much peace, both alone and when in company. My views were clear, my faith strong, and Jesus nigh; and, on a close examination as to the state of my soul, in the view of the approaching sacrament, I clearly perceived that a great change had passed upon me, which in the word of God is sometimes termed “a being born again,” sometimes, “a passing from death unto life,” and again, “being translated from the kingdom of Satan into the kingdom of God’s dear Son.” My reasons for *thus* judging are, First, I found I had been convinced of sin, and brought into a state of bondage and

fear. Secondly, I had been convinced of righteousness, whereby I had received *power* to believe on Christ, and found the Spirit of God witnessing with my spirit that I was his child : and as a corroborating proof that my faith was genuine, I found that it wrought by love to God and man, and led me to purify my heart. Thirdly, I felt a continual hungering and thirsting after righteousness ; ardent and habitual desires to be wholly devoted to God ; together with a *deep* sense of the depravity of my own nature.

— 13. Heard a profitable exhortation, and my heart seemed open to instruction and reproof. I stand amazed when I perceive how small a proportion my progress bears to my great privileges. Lord, quicken my tardy pace ! Wherefore is it I move so slowly ? If not deceived, I am in a great measure disunited from created things, and my desires are boundless and insatiable for spiritual blessings. Lord, search me, and see if there is yet undiscovered any way of wickedness in me, which, like the worm in Jonah's gourd, preys upon my spiritual constitution and keeps me thus lean. I was grieved to feel a proneness today to be displeased with others. Lord Jesus, thou art " manifested to destroy the works of the devil." O then, " enter my soul, and work within, and kill, and make alive." Destroy every evil temper, unholy passion, and unruly appetite ; save me from wandering thoughts, and idle words, with every foolish and hurtful desire. Let the leaven of thy grace spread, until the whole be leavened ; then shall I be enabled to adorn thy gospel.

— 28. Found myself much hurried with a variety of persons and things, and had little comfort in secret duties, with but small power to glorify God in any way, or to resist my enemies. I have felt greatly defective for some days in love to God ; in power and composure when engaged in prayer ; and also a proneness to impatience, self-will, and bitterness of spirit. O my God, I am oppressed ; undertake for me : I ardently desire entire devotion to thee, but all my efforts toward it are unavailing. I seem to row against both wind and tide. O Jesus, of old thou didst command the winds and waves, and they obeyed thee ; do thou speak the tempest of my soul into a calm : " lay the rough paths of peevish nature even," and again " open in my breast a little heaven." In the afternoon, He who is rich in mercy, in some measure helped me, and in the evening I felt animated and comforted by conversing with a fellow traveller, whose sentiments concerning the things both of time and eternity are very similar to my own : yet nothing can satisfy but the destruction of every thing in me that is contrary to the will of God. Without holiness there cannot be happiness. Lord, hear my prayer ; dry up this corrupt fountain, and unite me wholly to thyself, that I may glorify thee.

April 1. At seven heard a lecture from John i, 18 ; under

which the eye of my faith was clear as the shining of the sun at noonday ; Jesus seemed to stand in the midst, and I knew him as the Son of God, and as my Saviour. Amazing mystery of redeeming love ! But, Lord, let me sink deeper and deeper every day in the experimental knowledge of it. O let me sink into all the depths of humble love, and also rise to all the heights of Christian confidence ; thus, Lord, though a worm, I shall bring glory to thee ; without (strange notion of some) derogating from thy priestly office. O the various devices whereby Satan deceives the children of men ; not only the wicked into final destruction, but, alas ! the children of God, whereby they suffer much loss, and fall far short of that degree of glory they might have brought him here, and of consequence have enjoyed themselves hereafter ; many of them escaping only as with the skin of their teeth. Lord, prevent *me*, else it will be my own case.

— 25. This evening I ardently desired to go to the house of God ; and, upon getting there, for awhile enjoyed much comfort ; but it was soon interrupted by bodily indisposition. I grieved to find I was so easily incapacitated to serve God ; and, upon coming home, was induced to retire hastily to rest ; not, however, without afterward questioning the propriety of my conduct in so doing. I have never yet been able to determine, to my own satisfaction, the boundary of Christian duty in this particular ; how far duty and privilege should lead me to resist occasional and slight indisposition, and persist in attempting to go on as if in health. I know I have frequently felt uneasy in my mind upon yielding too readily ; and, on the other hand, have felt comfort and obtained relief when I have resisted painful feeling. I also know that human nature in general is inclined to self-indulgence ; and, therefore, if we err, it is safest to err on the other side.

— 27. Felt hurt to-day through unwatchfulness in conversation, though with the godly. I sometimes suffer more when with these than when with worldly people : with the latter, we are always on our guard : with the former, suspecting no danger, we loosen the reins of watchfulness, and then the enemy, ever waiting, easily gains an advantage. I also felt a degree of condemnation on account of not doing more for others. I feel almost constantly a painful sense of my shortcomings. Blessed be God, I know we are justified by faith in Christ ; but then I know also it is my privilege to be wholly devoted to God ; to be employed every moment of my time either for or with him ; and that in proportion to the progress I make in the divine life here, the degrees of conformity I gain to his image, so shall the degree of glory be which I shall enjoy with him hereafter ! What a stimulative should this prove. It is a poor, starving religion, if it deserves the name at all, that would make us wish only to *escape hell*, and *just to enter heaven*.

May 7. I feel impatient with myself, I am so unlike Jesus, and make so little progress in conformity to him, though surrounded with precious means. Lord, lay to thy hand, *that only* can bring salvation; and, O, let me enter into a fuller rest, sink into Christ, dwell in his wounds, be held in his heart, and lean on his bosom. O deliver me in heart and affection entirely from this scene of folly and sin: enable me to maintain a holy indifference to its smiles and frowns. I feel a painful regret that I have done little for God to-day. O deliver me from inactivity.

— 15. Endeavoured to spend some hours in the public worship of God, in what is termed by some a *watch night*. How reasonable is it, or rather what a privilege, sometimes to lengthen out our devotions; how much for the Christian's comfort and profit. How much time does the worldling spend to amass things that perish even in the using! How many hours will the drunkard give to his cups, the pleasure-taker to his amusements: and shall not the Christian, whose object is so much more glorious, be allowed at times also to exceed the usual limits prescribed for worshipping God? "Who shall prescribe a law to those that love?"

July 2. Many opportunities occurred to-day for the benefit of others, which I attempted to use. O God, withhold not thy blessing. Do thou remarkably bestow it upon *the school opened in thy name*: may many souls be brought to a knowledge of thyself in it. O God, we dedicate it unto thee; bless it, and it shall be blessed.

— 6. Enjoyed more life and composure of spirit in morning devotion. At ten, went to the house of God, where I was both disappointed and grieved. First, by finding the word attended with no power; and secondly, by observing the minister at much more pains to inculcate *opinions*, than to enforce the necessity of a change of heart, and a life of devotion to God. I cannot think that this controversial manner and method of preaching is the most likely way, either to awaken the unconverted, or to stir up Christians to press on for greater degrees of conformity to the mind and will of Christ. When it is much practised, I should be apt to fear the heart is not deeply impressed with a sense of divine things.

August 14. Since my last noting in writing the Lord's dealings with my soul, I have been confined by bodily affliction; in the course of it I experienced much languor upon my animal spirits, and also a degree of spiritual stupor. Before I was taken ill, I enjoyed much fervour of spirit; every nerve felt on the stretch for God, breathing constantly and ardently after the knowledge of his will in all things, and for power to do and suffer it. I never had seen it in such an amiable light; I felt willing to sacrifice all in order to attain. But, alas! how little did I know myself When he showed me he willed my afflic-

tion of body and mind, I shrunk back, unwilling to drink the bitter cup. He has again in a measure restored my bodily health; but still I feel a languor upon my spirits, and am to my own apprehension not so much on the stretch for God. I believe this is partly owing to my nervous system being greatly debilitated.

— 29. *Saughton-hall.* Was enabled to embrace the opportunities which offered to-day, both for giving and receiving profit, and found them comfortable. It seems as my meat and drink to act for God. In the evening, I attempted to bring some to the knowledge of God, by having the gospel preached to them in the house: they flocked to hear, and the word seemed to fall with power on some. I felt this attempt to do good attended with much inward opposition, but afterward enjoyed much comfort and strength of soul.

September 6. Felt life and power in family prayer this morning. Of late the Lord gives me more comfort in this duty than formerly. He enables me to enter into the spirit of prayer, and to *feel* what I say. It was at first a great cross to pray in my family, but now I see it is a great privilege, and would not give it up on any account. How often do I kneel cold and lifeless, and in a moment he quickens and comforts me. Bless the Lord, O my soul!

— 8. When I take a retrospective view of this day, it appears as a blank, because I have done nothing for God; though I do not know that I have neglected any opportunity: but I long to be all for him; continually employed for him. Many of the children of God are surprised at this language; they think it not necessary to be thus employed; that the Lord does not require it of us. I see it both necessary and a great privilege; I find it quickens my own soul; and that in proportion as I am alive myself, I am desirous for the salvation of others. I am firmly persuaded that continually attempting to fill up all our time with and for God, is the way to have our peace flow as a river, and our righteousness to be as the waves of the sea. This I speak from experience, and think on such a subject the strongest arguments may be derived from thence. At the same time, I feel fully convinced that salvation, from beginning to end, *is all of grace*. I bless God, I feel no desire but to build my hopes upon Christ. My heart deceives me much if I am what *some call* an Arminian in that point: though I believe most people do Arminius injustice herein. I think it is others, not he, who build salvation on a mere moral plan: but, be that as it may, I leave him and all others to stand or fall to their own Master; what I want is, the possession of every blessing Christ has purchased for sinners.

— 12. Proved to-day how unprofitable it is to dispute upon the things of God. It is seldom attended with sweetness of spirit; and what truth is there against which there is not a pos-

sibility of raising some objection? But is this the most excellent way? Let us be satisfied that we are *born of God*, and then we have His promise who cannot lie: "They shall be taught of God." My faith, hitherto, has not stood on the wisdom of man, but in the power of Him who cannot err. Upon my first turning to the Lord, I was soon aware of the distraction and bitterness of spirit which prevailed among many otherwise good people; owing to the variety of opinions which they had respectively embraced. This made me determine that God, and not man, should teach me. I therefore gave myself up to him, and entreated that he would, by his word and Spirit, lead me into all truth: not only into those principles absolutely necessary to be believed; but also into matters of less consequence, that are most for his glory and the profit of my own soul. This request I often repeated, and have since found the benefit of it. It has kept me from holding any man's person in undue admiration; and, of consequence, from implicitly following any. What had been written by different authors on both sides the question, I endeavoured to read with caution, and received nothing but upon satisfactory evidence. I find both safety and comfort in neither reading books, nor conversing with any person, without immediate application to the Lord, that I may receive nothing from either, but what is agreeable to his holy will.

October 9. My unfaithfulness yesterday stirred me up to attempt greater vigilance to-day, and the Lord gave me opportunity and power; and much sweetness and strength, as usual, immediately followed my feeble efforts. O how desirable it is to do the will of God! I sometimes think being *allowed to do this* is reward enough, though I should not see any of the fruit of my labours; but he is very gracious in condescending to show, at times, that my attempts are not always in vain. I do desire to glorify him: this by far proves the strongest stimulative to duty, and I think increases so as almost to supersede all other motives. For some days past, I have felt the deepest convictions of my helplessness, and inability to do any thing but as I am every moment assisted; and from thence has sprung deep gratitude to God for the gospel plan of salvation. It is well for me that I am to be saved by grace; for I am nothing, have nothing, and can do nothing. The Lord often causes me to dwell upon my own imperfections, follies, and miscarriages; makes me sensible what a poor, wretched, miserable, comfortless creature I should have been, if left to the efforts of nature; and this makes me admire his bounty and goodness to me. But, notwithstanding this, I feel pride; I am far from that deep humility which flows from a thorough knowledge of ourselves. O, how dull a disciple I am! how often do I need to be reproved for the same fault! O for power in all things, and at all times, *to do the will of my God*. I look for this:—this is the *perfection* I

aim at. It is the highest idea I can form of happiness; the most refined and exalted enjoyment of which I have any conception;—living every moment in the spirit of sacrifice; feeling my will sweetly flowing with his! but this the power of divine grace alone can effect. My Jesus, what endless praises are due to thee, who hast purchased this great salvation; also to the eternal Spirit who applies it; and to trace it up to the fountain head, to the ever blessed Father, who planned it in the councils of eternity. All glory, honour, and praise to the triune God.

— 22. I seem to grow worse instead of better. O that I might believe this apprehension was occasioned by increasing light. I would not flatter myself, I wish to know the worst. Show me, Lord, as I can bear it, the depth of my depravity; but let me also prove the utmost power of thy transforming grace. Wretched as I am, I still thirst for the glory of God and the salvation of my fellow creatures; and would wish, if strengthened, to do or suffer any thing to procure both. Yet, in spite of this constant ardour, I have continual need to be stirred up to greater activity in the ways of God. I find a propensity to sink into a supine spirit: this, I believe, is in part occasioned by a weak body, together with a delicate nervous system and a natural inclination to solitude. Yet I think this last is well nigh conquered, by a strong desire to do all the good I can while in this vale of tears; though herein I am circumscribed within very narrow limits. Were my abilities equal to my desires, my acts of beneficence would be diffusive as the rays of the sun, and numerous as the sands upon the seashore.

Dec. 18th. I bless the Lord he has increased my communion with himself to-day. I found it sweet, yea, seemed drawn by divine attraction, to leave the creature, in order to enjoy my God by prayer and meditation; while a sensible communication seemed opened between my soul and the invisible world. What shall I render unto the Lord for all his goodness! Alas, how inadequate are my returns of gratitude, love, zeal, or activity. I have much cause to blush and be ashamed, and also to lament that my progress in sanctification is so small. In the evening read a sermon on the privilege of believers, especially in their communion with Christ. It proved a time of refreshing, a season of love; my views were clear; my faith, love, and gratitude were increased; while the Lord clearly showed me that all this through grace was mine. "O wondrous grace, O boundless love!" At night, while reading the noble testimony which many of old bore to the truth, both by their life and death, my soul felt more drawn out than for a long time, for the whole salvation of God. I seemed to mount up on the wings of strong desire. I had grieved for many weeks for the want of this blessing. Since the middle of July last, when I was seized with a severe illness, I seemed in a great measure to lose it: I thought

I had never fully recovered it, yet my enjoyment, as to the *comforts* of religion, have been greater than they were even then. O what cause have I to praise the Lord, that since I came here, hardly a day has passed in which he has not given me a special token of his love, together with peace in believing. Indeed, he has never suffered me to give up my confidence since the happy day he blessed me with it. Once or twice, for a day or two, soon after I obtained peace, my evidences seemed a little clouded, which threw me into a great distress; but the Lord, who has abounded in all goodness to me, soon returned to me what I had lost; so that these tossings seemed permitted, in order to fix me more solidly on the Rock of ages. "O what shall I do my Saviour to praise!"

CHAPTER VI.—1771.

Lady Maxwell's diary continued.

Jan. 16. My communion with God and his dear Son has been delightful for some days past; O to have it without those interruptions to which it has hitherto been subject! Could I receive an opinion embraced by many, my distress on this account would not be so great—which is, that God withdraws from the souls of his people without any offence given on their part. From the Scriptures, I think it rather appears to be their privilege to enjoy constant communion with him. In John xiv, 23, he seems to promise it: "If a man love me he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." In all the places of the Old Testament I recollect at present, *sin* is by God assigned as the only cause of punishing his people, or of keeping back from them any good thing: but in this, as in all things, I would wish to be open to conviction. I desire to bless his holy name, that, though I feel a difference as it respects the *degrees* of communion I enjoy, yet he never takes from me the witness of his blessed Spirit. O what cause for praise. In the evening felt access to God in prayer, and power to make my wants known to him.

Feb. 11. Heard a profitable sermon on Rom. viii, 32. Toward the end, when the minister addressed himself to the children of God, I felt a sweet consciousness of being one of them. This was immediately followed by an anxious, earnest desire, to be entirely devoted to him; and a painful conviction of my shortcoming. I desired to be in secret, that I might pour out my heart to God: but when I got by myself, found a want of holy violence in prayer. Lord, let me not rest short of being wholly given up to thee. I see this at a distance, and O how much is

it to be desired,—*walking with God*. For several days have enjoyed much sweetness in the exercise of *waiting upon God*; desiring his will should take place, and that in all things I should be resigned to it. I have many things depending at present; many fears, cares, and trials; but find some comfort in giving them all up to him. I hope he is in some measure weaning me from created things. Lord enable me to say,

“’Tis done, the great decisive part,
The world’s subdued, and heaven has all my heart.”

“We are chained to this world by strong ties,” says a good man, “and every sorrow cuts a string, and urges us to rise;” therefore I would bless God for all, but *most* for the severe. He did indeed choose me in the furnace of affliction. *He took all, and then he gave me all*; for he gave me his dear Son, and having him I have all things. O for a deeper acquaintance with him, a closer union and greater conformity.

March 2. I have been much hurried for some days, and variously tried; yet the Lord so comforts and supports me that I hardly wish to get out of the furnace. I never felt so much reconciled to the cross: it is, I find, productive of many good effects. It weans us from the world, from *self*, softens the heart, and breaks the stubborn will; yet this only through grace. I feel a disposition to lie as clay in the hands of my divine Potter. I believe when the *cross ceaseth* to be *necessary*, I shall suffer no more. Lord, carry on thy work in me in thy own way. Endeavoured to embrace the opportunities that offered for the good of others these few days past. However unable to effect this, my desires are no less than usual, and the Lord still continues to own my feeble efforts.

— 22. To-day I feel unwell in body, but I bless the Lord for peace of mind, and some communion with himself; this supports me under the pressure of various trials. “It is good for a man,” says the mournful prophet, “that he bear the yoke in his youth.” I have found it so for years. The medicine was indeed bitter, but since the cure has been in any measure effected by it, it is great cause of thankfulness. I would still, O my God, desire to be as clay in thy hand, and not give place to one murmuring thought: and if (as I believe it is) for thy glory would farther desire, with thy servant of old, to count it all joy when I fall into tribulation. Alas, I am far from this! O my God, how much is still to be done in me; work for the glory, of thy great name; and let, O let me enter into rest, that I may praise thee! Have felt at times to-day a cloud of grief; not darkening, but pressing down my soul. There may be sorrow without sin. There is, I think, a degree of this that has its foundation in simple nature, which doth not render us culpable in the sight of God. Lord, my sighing is not hid from thee; neither are the causes of it. I commit all to thee; O let it be

in well doing. What, in a great measure, quiets my mind under every event which befalls me, is, resolving all into either thy express or permissive will: and as such, I feel it precious, however otherwise afflictive. Yet at times my distress receives a pungency, from a thought that frequently passes through my mind, viz., that by my sins I constrain God to chastise me. Lord, I would not willingly offend thee; it causes grief when I do. Alas, that I need so often to sorrow on this account. O Jesus, how precious art thou to me, who feel I come short in all I do, and in many things offend.

April 12. Found power through grace to thank God, yea, to rejoice that I was disliked for Christ's sake; yet nature seemed to think it severe. My soul was grieved this forenoon with the workings of corruption; O for victory. Of late, I have felt a painful consciousness of my unprofitableness. I seem to live for no good end. Lord, stir me up, and give me power to do something for thee; and do thou enlarge my borders. O let every power, faculty, and talent be sanctified and set apart for thee. Thou, Lord, knowest what a grief of soul it is to me, that my abilities at present are circumscribed within such narrow limits. Had I millions, I would glory in using all to promote thy cause in the world. O make me faithful in the small matter thou hast committed to my trust.

May 4. The Lord enabled me to rise early, in order to wait on him this morning; and though I did not obtain what I wanted, yet I find, in general, my expectation of the blessing is weakened or strengthened according to my diligence in the use of the means of grace which God has appointed. It certainly is the rankest enthusiasm to expect any blessing without the use of means. May the Lord give me that measure of grace which will enable me to work as diligently, in the way pointed out by the oracles of God, as if my acceptance and whole salvation depended on it; and yet at the same time to trust no more to it than if I had not done so.

June 17. Opportunities occurred to-day for the spiritual and temporal good of others, which I attempted to improve; the Lord only can give a blessing. Angels themselves, without this, would be of no service; and with it the *meanest creature* may do good. In the evening, obtained power to take up my cross and follow the Lord: though it was not succeeded by any particular blessing, yet I find every step taken in the unfrequented path of self-denial is of use. It strengthens our confidence in the pardoning love of God, and weakens the principle of self-indulgence, to which we have a strong natural propensity.

— 22. Being the fast day before sacrament in Leith, I set apart all the forenoon for prayer, reading, meditation, and self-examination; and all the day and night for abstinence: and though very dull when I began the work, I have reason to say

the Lord was gracious. He seemed to melt down my heart under a sense of repeated backslidings (at least partial ones) from himself; showed me the evils that remained in my heart and life; and at the same time showed me the things that were freely given me of God. He gave me strong desires that whatever was amiss might be rectified, and what was lacking might be supplied. Upon a retrospective view of my state since last at the Lord's table, I have much reason to mourn that instead of having gained ground I seem to have lost some. I do not find such firmness in taking up my cross, nor such constant self-denial as I have experienced. O my God, have mercy on me, and let me not sink from thee: stir me up for the glory of thy name. Enjoyed a sweet time in secret prayer to-day, and thought I was enabled in faith to plead a promise, forcibly applied to my mind some time ago, and which I imagined many months since the Lord was about to accomplish: but these fair appearances he permitted to be blasted, (perhaps to try my faith,) and my expectations grew faint; though still in a measure I believed the promise could not fail, "that it was for an appointed time, and in the end would speak." I was therefore encouraged to wait for it; and for some days I have been enabled to "hope against hope." Yesterday, I seemed by faith to anticipate its accomplishment, though without any knowledge of the time when "I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living." "Wait on the Lord, be of good courage," O my soul, "and he shall strengthen thine heart; wait, I say, on the Lord." Though surrounded with a variety of trials, temptations, and inward conflicts; with the concurrence of many outward circumstances, which have a natural tendency to depress and weigh thee down; yet still trust in thy God, and glorify him in the fires. He has delivered, he does deliver, and he will still deliver. O, what good cause have I still to trust in him for all things, when he has so clearly revealed his dear Son in me; and even in my deepest distress, whether from within or without, never permits me to lose sight of a reconciled God, or of my union with his blessed Son. What an unspeakable blessing: well may this support me under every pressure. But how little acquainted with the divine life are those who think and say that there can be no distress of soul where there is a constant sense of an interest in Christ. I feel the falsity of this assertion. What numberless waves of sorrow have gone over my head, even in the space of the last twelve months, many of them, indeed, if not all, unknown to the world, though many of them were from it. I confess in them all the Lord graciously supported me, and in many of them he richly comforted me. He caused his consolations so to abound, that upon a review I do not think I should wish to have been exempted from any one of them, except those

my sin and folly brought on me. I cannot think that *these* could be either for the glory of God, or the good of my soul.

Edinburgh, Newtown, July 19. Since my last date in June, I have been variously hindered, and have moved from my lodgings to this place, which, in all probability, will be the last remove, till I go hence to be no more seen. I trust the Lord will give me peace in this place, and greatly increase me, even with all the increase of God. This new habitation was early dedicated to God; the foundation was laid in prayer; it was carried on and finished with prayer; and again, when I came into it, it was solemnly devoted to him. Before that he had owned it, and in the space of two weeks that I have been in it he has given me sweet intimations of his love, the privilege of many prayers from his servants and people, who also have dedicated it to him. O my God, do thou make it a habitation for thyself to dwell in; let thine eyes be toward it for good, and thine ears open to the prayers that shall be put up in it.

— 21. My spiritual joys have not been so great to-day. My time has been much occupied for the good of others, but I did not feel such nearness to God, neither such a clear perception of divine objects as usual. Is there to be obtained, while here, such a stability in the ways of God, as will render our *feelings* always alike? Ah! no,—the union subsisting between the soul and body is so close and intimate, and the latter necessarily subjected to such a great variety of changes from different causes, that these must unavoidably, more or less, affect its immaterial companion. One would almost regret that, agreeably to the present laws of human nature, we can receive no impressions but through the gross medium of matter. What a glorious prospect does revelation afford us, when this mortal shall put on immortality; “when we shall know even as we are known.” We shall then at first sight perceive causes and their effects, without the tedious process of reasoning; every faculty of the soul will be enlarged, made perfect, and commensurate with the objects and enjoyments of the heavenly country; but above all, we shall, if truly good, for ever bask in the beams of redeeming love. How surprising, that the thoughts of such amazing bliss do not prove a stronger stimulative in our Christian course! Why, O my soul, so languid? why not always praising? Lord, forgive my dulness; O kindle a greater flame of divine love in my heart, and let it never be extinguished, but burn brighter and brighter till it mingles with the blaze of eternal day.

— 23. I bless God I have peace, but I do not feel the lively actings of faith; that inexpressible sweetness which flows from a close communion with God, with which, through superabounding grace, I am often favoured. How many persons, things, and places have striven for my heart; but still, through the agency of an invisible Power, the scale turns in favour of God and eternal

things. I see, I feel the vanity of all below ; and yet, how often, for a time, am I overcome with those very things which I in my judgment despise. This proves what an overmatch passion is for reason ; it proves, also, how far we are fallen from that rectitude in which man was at first created ; but, above all, it convinces me what a debtor I am to God : who, without violently controlling my will, has often, by a sweet omnipotence, interposed, and drawn me from many things and persons that would have otherwise proved hurtful ; arresting (if I may use the expression) both my judgment and affections. Evermore, O my God, do thou thus guide and overrule my determinations, both in heart and life, till thy love has made an entire conquest.

August 2. My spiritual joy has in a measure subsided, and settled into a calm sweet confidence in God, with a delightful consciousness of my union with Jesus. How far superior is this *heartfelt knowledge* of God, to the abstracted and metaphysical reasoning of the schools. While our knowledge of divine things rests only on this latter evidence, its influence must be very feeble ; not sufficient to enable us to resist temptation, or to persevere in the path of virtue and true goodness. Found my soul strengthened and comforted to-day by helping others in the good way.

— 5. This has truly been a sweet day. I have enjoyed close communion with the beloved of my soul. Jesus has been very near, and as visible to the eye of faith as ever a material object was to the eye of the body. This language, to those who are unacquainted with experimental religion, must appear quite unintelligible, but “he that believeth hath the witness in himself.” True, indeed, this is an argument for the truth that can have weight with none but those who feel it. O that I could convey its powerful effects to the hearts of all. Was a good deal hurried through the day, but, having instant access to the tower into which the righteous run, I enjoyed much comfort. How blessed are those whose God is the Lord. But O, I long to feel more of the sanctifying influences of those manifestations of divine love. How unlike am I to Jesus ! How little of his mind do I possess ! In the evening, walked out with a Christian friend : my heart felt aspiring to God : I saw his name on all around me : the sky was unclouded and serene,—a lively emblem, I thought, of a soul at peace with its Maker. Endeavoured to improve the time by religious conversation, and also dared to reprove notorious offenders. Were I to follow my natural inclinations I should wish never to find fault, but by the silent reprehension of a better conduct. The oracles of God, however, are so clear in pointing this out as a duty, and it is so written on my heart, that when I disobey it brings distress. I am therefore constrained to do violence to myself, rather than hurt my own conscience and grieve the Spirit of grace. I confess it requires

much prudence and wisdom to determine the *manner* and the *time* : a deep consciousness of this often deters me.

— 7. Alas, I have done little or nothing for God to-day. I long to be active as fire for him, and steady as the needle to the pole. I seem at present to lead a useless life. Lord, point out my way ; show me if there is any thing I can do for thee. I grieve to live as a piece of live lumber in the world. I hope to have yet something to do ; what it is I know not. I trust this hope and desire flow not from ostentation, but gratitude to that God who has done so much for me. Had I thousands, I think, through grace, I would spend them in propagating the gospel, in spreading the knowledge of Jesus, “that blessed name that charms my fears, and bids my sorrows cease.” O what music is in the sound. Often when I read or hear it, my heart (if I may use the expression) vibrates like a musical chord when its unison is struck.

— 25. In the evening, though indisposed, felt much desire to go to the house of God ; which I did, but was disappointed. The word came with no power, and my joy was a little interrupted from a consciousness of unfaithfulness. This by some may be termed a legal spirit ; yet I can hardly see it possible how a real Christian can converse with the word of God, and also study his own heart and experience, and not be sensible that his comfort increases or diminishes according to his close or careless walking with God. I do not know that any can be more willing to ascribe the whole of man’s salvation to free grace ; yet, I confess, I see such a close connection between the reception of this grace, and a constant attempting to walk before God unto all well pleasing, and a diligent use of every ordinance of the Lord’s appointing—that, to speak my own experience, I never in any measure separate them but I suffer loss in my soul. Yet in this and all other matters, I would speak with the greatest modesty, conscious of my ignorance ; and therefore desire never to advance my own opinion, either in conversation or writing, upon any subject, without wishing, if it be wrong, that I may be convinced of it, either by God or man.

— 28. I have cause to remark the goodness of the Lord, who has in some measure appeared to me in a particular trial, the weight of which in part I still feel and fear. There are some occurrences in the course of Providence which, taken separately, or only considered in themselves, seem of little account, especially to the careless spectator ; but, when viewed by the eye of faith, appear impressed with such remarkable characters of the divine favour and special goodness as add greatly to their intrinsic value. They then bring with them a sweet and powerful conviction of the interposition of a divine agency in our behalf. In the course of my small experience in the divine life, I have much to record of the goodness of the Lord as manifested in this

way. O how far short do I come in my returns for such a waste of love!

September 5. This morning, while in secret prayer, the Lord gave me a clear and strong persuasion that he was about to work a great deliverance for me, and seemed to show me in what way; and that, by the accomplishment of a certain event, it was his will to make good the promises powerfully impressed on my mind some years ago. The impression continued strong all the time I was at prayer. I cried earnestly to him, that if an enemy had done this he would rebuke the adversary, and obliterate the remembrance of it, but it still continued. If from himself, I felt as clay in the hands of the potter, willing to be moulded as he saw meet; nay, my natural will seemed quite broken, and sweetly flowed with his. I purposely refrain from mentioning the particulars of this manifestation till the accomplishment of these promises proves it to be of the Lord. He has in great mercy hitherto kept me from being deceived by dreams, visions, revelations, and all the train of evils consequent upon giving implicit credence to every impression made upon the mind; many of which owe their birth only to the operations of Satan, or a heated imagination; and I trust he will still keep me. But entirely distinct from this *wild fire* are the clear intimations which the Lord sees proper at times to give his people of what he is about to do for them, either in the way of deliverance from trouble, or of particular trials that are about to befall them, where perhaps his glory and the good of their souls are concerned. This is entirely agreeable to the experience of scriptural saints, as clearly appears from the account given of Abraham, Joseph, &c., and is corroborated by the testimony of many now living; among whom, if I may mention myself, I would say, poor and undeserving as I am, the Lord has condescended, oftener than once or twice, to deal thus with me. O how familiarly does God deal with his children.

— 27. I feel an increasing desire to be active for God, and a growing zeal for his glory. For some little time my meditations have been mostly confined to this one thing, *what can I do for the Lord?* Alas, my sphere is small, my circle very narrow; not so my desires: they compass kingdoms, and would subdue nations to God. O that my borders were enlarged: I partly believe they will. How are our fallen natures dignified by being permitted and empowered to love and serve God; yea, in being made partakers of the divine nature! How unfathomable the depths of redeeming love! Lord, strengthen and stir up thy unworthy servant to declare thy loving kindness, to testify of thy faithfulness, yea, to proclaim to all that thou art God; worthy to be praised and had in reverence. Alas, that I meet with so few who are like minded. Most think it is enough if they save their own soul. Some suppose it is presumption;

that, Uzzalike, they will be smitten by the Lord, if they put their hand to the ark. Others (strange imagination !) think, if they were to be active in the cause of Christ, or show any zeal for the glory of God, it would be to establish their own righteousness, a building salvation on a moral plan, and a pretending to add something to the finished salvation of Christ. For fear of this, they dare not do any thing. They sit down with their hands across, and rest satisfied that whatsoever is ordained will come to pass. Unquestionably, "known to God are all his works from the beginning," and his work shall be wrought, though not by them. They will lose much of the comfort they might have enjoyed *here*, and a great degree of that glory he would have given them *hereafter*. "For as one star differeth from another star in glory, so also is the resurrection of the dead." O, when shall we see that generous spirit of piety which prevailed among the primitive Christians revived ? They were not satisfied with barely saving their own souls ; they used all their influence for the good of others and the glory of God ; all they had was devoted to his service. Not from mercenary views, or from supposing they could thereby gain eternal life. No,—a much more generous motive stimulated their endeavours. *The love of Christ constrained them.* What a pity that this noble incentive to duty does not operate in a more powerful manner upon their successors. I am afraid the *love of the world* constrains many of them to a very different conduct. They do not enter so deeply into religion as to enjoy the comfort of it ; of consequence, they seek happiness in the creature. This takes their hearts from God, and makes them drive heavily on in his ways ; and perhaps, at last, when they come to die, they escape as with the skin of their teeth. It is hardly possible to express the folly of this conduct ; it shows the deep and universal depravity of human nature ; that men can prefer the husks of this world to communion with God. His will is, that we should walk all the day long with him, Enochlike, eying his glory in all we do, and consecrating all we have and are to him. This the apostle terms our reasonable service, but is it not also our highest privilege ? Lord, let my future conduct show continually that I esteem it such ! O save me from the errors that are so rampant among the professors of Christianity, in precept and practice, upon the right hand and the left. From dwelling too much upon the privileges of the gospel to the neglect of its precepts ; and also from the leaven of Pharisaism, in supposing that the strictest attention I can pay to the duties of religion will merit my acceptance with God. May both be kept in their proper place.

December 11. I now take up my pen to set up my Ebenezer, saying, "Hitherto the Lord hath helped me." Since my last date, he has appeared wonderfully in my behalf, and given me

to find it is not in vain to trust him. This he has enabled me to do for some time more than usual, even when all things seemed to make against me, and I have not been disappointed. He has wrought out a present deliverance for me, not in the way I looked for, but in his own way and time, which is best. This instance of his seasonable goodness has increased my faith, confirmed my hope, and strengthened my love. O that my future life may be wholly devoted to *Him* who has done so much for me, and who has given me cause to expect still greater things. This is wholly a temporal deliverance, but at the same time stands connected in some measure with my profession as a disciple of Jesus : and is such a proof to me of the faithfulness and goodness of God, as I hope will prove very useful to me, in enabling me to trust in him with an unbounded confidence for the future.

— 19. I found the Beloved of my soul near in morning devotion ; and in the forenoon my mind felt sweetly led out in heavenly meditations : all around me seemed God. With what propriety does the apostle say, “ To be spiritually minded is life and peace.” The soul that enjoys communion with God can witness the truth of the assertion. In proportion as this divine life prevails, a deadness to the things of time and sense increases, the perception of heavenly objects grows clearer, the soul sees God even in outward things, and endeavours to make his glory the ultimate end of every action ; she consults him on all occasions, and finds direction in the minutest steps of life : whatever occurs, whether joyous or grievous, is carried to a throne of grace, where a degree of holy familiarity and nearness is allowed which is better felt than expressed. There the happy soul, without any reserve, pours all her joys and sorrows, her hopes and fears, into the bosom of a reconciled God and Father. If a trial is feared, it is either averted or power is given to bear it like a Christian. All desire of worldly things is lost, except as they stand more immediately or remotely connected with the glory of God ; and, even in that case, all dependence upon an arm of flesh for obtaining them is removed. If a babe in Christ can witness the truth of these things, O what do the fathers enjoy ? My God, let me know by happy experience.

— 20. Endeavoured to set apart this day for prayer, examination, and fasting, as far as my constitution would permit ; and I have cause to be thankful I felt a greater degree of heavenly mindedness than I generally feel on these occasions ; and, if my heart did not deceive me, found reason to conclude I was not going back in the divine life. My reasons for thinking so were, First, my feeling for some time a greater power to cast all my cares on God and to trust in him than usual. Secondly, what follows of course, less dependence upon an arm of flesh. Thirdly, greater love to God, and more power to own him and

his cause before men. Fourthly, greater stability in his ways, and also more comfort, together with a growing desire to be wholly conformed, at least so far as humanity will permit, to his holy will. But O what cause did I also feel to blush, grieve, and be ashamed. Lord, rectify what is amiss, supply what is lacking, and give not over striving with me, till thy love has made an entire conquest, till I am lost and swallowed up in thee.

CHAPTER VII.—1772.

Remarks on the duty of fasting—On the sacrament of the Lord's supper—
The manner in which it is administered in Scotland—Diary continued.

It was about this period that Lady Maxwell commenced a practice which has been already briefly adverted to, that of setting apart every Friday for the duties of fasting, self-examination, and prayer. To these solemn exercises, on this day, she regularly and conscientiously attended throughout the remainder of her life; and at these seasons she was generally favoured with more than ordinary consolation. How is it to be accounted for, that the duty of fasting is at present so little regarded by the generality of religious professors? The fast days of our forefathers are nominally retained; but there is abundant reason to suspect that the name of the thing is nearly all that remains of it. Is it because Christians have adopted a more regular and abstemious mode of living now, than did those of former times? Or, because some have attached a superstitious importance to this matter, do professors think it may be totally neglected by them with impunity? "Fasting," says Jeremy Taylor, "is a proper, apt, natural, usual expression, and an exercise of repentance; it has some natural and many collateral advantages." "It is," observes another distinguished divine, "a help to prayer; particularly when we set apart large portions of time for private prayer. Then especially it is, that God is often pleased to lift up the souls of his servants above all the things of earth, and sometimes to raise them up, as it were, to the third heavens." It will be seen that Lady Maxwell, in her attendance to this duty, realized in her experience all the advantages here described.

"The light in which her ladyship viewed the communion of the body and blood of her Lord deserves also to be particularly noticed. She looked upon this as an act of obedience to a solemn, binding command of her Redeemer, given at a time and under circumstances so awful and endearing to Christians, as should cause it ever to live in their remembrance; she viewed it as forming a bond of union among God's faithful followers, as being one of the nearest approaches to Deity, and most intimate

participations of himself ; as furnishing one of the choicest means of grace, in which God seals his children ; she moreover considered it as a practical avowal of the Christian's attachment to his Lord, and a public renewal of his covenant engagement. For her to have learned that there were in the world Christian persons, professing the power of godliness, and declaring their love to Christ ; zealous in their attendance on *prudential means* of grace, yet living in the glaring neglect of this *divinely instituted* ordinance, would have appeared to her such an anomaly in religion as to involve in itself a palpable contradiction. These views were in nowise peculiar to herself. This is the light in which the Lord's supper is viewed by every serious person in Scotland, while its binding obligation on every Christian is acknowledged even by the profane. It is there considered as the *test* or *sign* of church membership ; and how far *any* kind of connection with the Christian church can constitute a member of the universal church of Christ *at all*, without commemorating his dying love as opportunity may offer, is a question fairly open for discussion. The *stress*, likewise, which the ministers north of the Tweed lay on a proper observance of the Christian pass-over ; explaining its nature, displaying its use, describing the qualifications necessary to a worthy and profitable participation of it, and urging its indispensable obligation—all of which are warranted by Scripture, and justified by the importance of the ordinance ; have a tendency to awaken general attention, excite desire, and draw a full attendance on those occasions ; and, as great expectations are raised, so spiritual profiting most frequently ensues. Lady Maxwell delightfully embraced every opportunity of this kind, not only at one but at different churches, and also at the chapel where her attendance was constant ; and generally, if not invariably, she experienced them to be times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord.

In some of the extracts which refer to those seasons, her ladyship will be found expressing her thankfulness for having been enabled to remain until the close of the ordinance. — To a person unacquainted with the nature of a Scottish sacrament, such allusions will need explanation. In the populous parishes, and especially in the cities and towns, the number of communicants is so great that the service is generally continued for several hours. Not unfrequently from eleven in the morning until four in the afternoon ; so that few persons can conveniently remain the whole of the time. The manner also in which the elements of bread and wine are distributed, and the lengthened addresses from different ministers, tend to protract the service. And though, to an uninterested observer, there may often be at least the appearance of confusion, yet, from the number of ministers present, and the consequent variety of ministerial talents which are called into exercise, tediousness is greatly avoided. Espe-

cially to those, who, as Lady M. was accustomed to do, "discern the Lord's body," solemnity and devotion reign through the whole, and to the end of the ordinance a gracious influence is maintained.* After these remarks her ladyship shall again detail her own history.

February 6. Since my last date, January 29, the Father of mercies hath visited me with affliction. But O, how gentle has been his rod! How much mercy has he mixed in the cup! I have not in any previous affliction enjoyed so much of God. I was allowed sweet communion with him, while from the beginning I was persuaded there was no death in the cup. When on a sick bed, what friend is like unto God? Who can support, who can comfort like him? Diseases are his servants, they come at his command, and as he speaks to the proud waves so he does to them, "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no farther." Lord, I desire to devote my spared life to thee. O, let all I have and am be thine: brace every nerve, invigorate my animal spirits, scatter the life of Jesus through every part, and sanctify the whole. The Lord hath this day fully completed what many months ago he enabled me to believe he would do. How great is his faithfulness, how great is his condescension to me, *even to me!* What shall I say; I feel lost in wonder; words fail, they cannot express my grateful sensations:—and shall I not trust him for what is to come? Yes, my God, through thy strength, I will believe not one word shall fail of all thou hast promised. What mercies I have experienced since the Lord first inclined me to seek his face! I may indeed say, they are more in number than the hairs of my head. I have committed a few of them to writing for my own benefit, but how many have I omitted, or neglected. Lord, write them upon my heart. I blush and am ashamed when I think of the poor returns I have made; of my numberless backslidings, repeated miscarriages, and base ingratitude. I would deeply lament them. O blot them out by blood divine, bury them in eternal oblivion, and for thy name's sake give me power to walk before thee unto all well-pleasing. I have felt for days past constrained to stimulate others to love and serve God. What an active principle is love—may I ever feel its sweet influence!

— 8. The preparation before the sacrament in the Cannon-gate. The Lord hath dealt bountifully with me to-day; I can truly say, my communion has been with the Father and the Son.

* It must be acknowledged that at Scottish *country* sacraments indecorous scenes have occasionally occurred. "But those persons, however, who gather their information of these times from the profane description drawn by the licentious author of '*The Holy Fair*,' will be prepared to form an opinion of puritanical intellect and piety from the buffoonery of Butler in his *Hudibrastic* rant."

When I arose in the morning, and began to examine the state of my mind, I found God was with me to bless; and, in secret prayer, I was permitted into the presence-chamber, and obtained most endearing and heart-ravishing views of God,—as a faithful God; as a promise-making, and promise-keeping God. I have proved him so indeed, and I will trust him. I have felt my soul to-day abhorring sin more than ever, and earnestly longing to be wholly given up to God.

— 10. Sunday. With greater earnestness than ever I desired to go to the Lord's table. Arose early in the morning, and spent a long time in secret, but did not feel remarkably alive till within a very little of my going out. I went to prayer, and was enabled to plead the blood of Jesus with such prevalence for all I wanted at his table, as I never remember before, and it was a truly profitable day. My tide of spiritual joy did not run so high as I have felt it; but I enjoyed unutterable peace, and felt surrounded with the love of God my Saviour. It seemed as a bulwark unto me. Faith felt almost lost, if not in sight, at least in enjoyment. In my way home at night I was blessed with heavenly and heart-comforting meditations of God, and his amazing goodness to me. When I arrived, the Lord fed me with the manna of his love, and blessed social prayer and Christian conversation. Eternal praises to the God of all grace.

— 11. I cannot express the goodness of God to-day; words will not convey an adequate idea of it to others. In the morning felt unwell, nature cried, 'spare thyself,' but in the midst of weakness I longed to go to the church. My body soon regained strength, and through the day I was favoured with sweet communion with my God and Saviour. At half past ten, heard a discourse from "Abide ye in my love." The words seemed peculiarly addressed to me, and the whole sermon was food to my soul suited to my experience. But my soul almost trembled lest any enemy should get in. I felt so centred in God, that the thoughts of even a partial separation was like death. Immediately after the sermon, went to visit the sick; still my mind was preserved in perfect peace, and in great condescension he blessed the words spoken to the afflicted. I had, soon after, the prospect of being with those who were ignorant of God: this caused me to cry earnestly to him to preserve me from injury; and he heard me in the thing which I feared; enabled me to confess him, and all the time to enjoy delightful communion with himself. My enjoyments have been very great today. I think I have had a *measure* of that perfect love that casteth out all slavish fear. Lord, whence is all this goodness to me! O for a grateful heart. Maintain what thou hast wrought. I feel dwelling in God. Praises—praises—praises!

— 20. How shall I describe the delightful communion I have enjoyed with God to-day:—the permanent rest I have

found in him! He has since morning continually breathed upon my soul, and by a divine expiration my soul continually breathed back his love. When I rose in the morning, I felt my soul rather languid; but after breakfast inclined to retirement and secret prayer. Enjoyed a good time at the throne of grace, and immediately after the Lord drew near, and gave me to feel the accomplishment of a promise made by the Saviour: "If a man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him," John xiv, 23. To the former part of this scripture I lay no particular claim, and the latter I only repeat as conveying a more distinct idea of what, through abounding mercy, I have enjoyed, than any words I can use. After all, it is more than I can express. Lord, what is man! What am I that thou shouldst deal so familiarly with me! I cannot now doubt but that the Lord has given me to enjoy for some time a *small measure* of that perfect love which casteth out fear; a *taste* of entire devotion. Lord, increase it, and keep it for me; for I fear lest I should grieve thy Spirit, and thus cause thee to deprive me of it, though this fear is subsiding, and I feel more confirmed.

— 21. After writing the above last night, I enjoyed such delightful intercourse with God before I retired as made me regret the necessity of interrupting it by taking necessary rest. On going to bed, so many comfortable scriptures poured in upon my mind, that I fell asleep filled with the love of God. Yet through the night I was uncommonly distressed with frightful dreams, and, like Job, scared with visions. In the midst of them I happily awoke, and found my joy in God continued. In a few minutes I again fell asleep, and again suffered similar distress. To what shall I impute this? To the power of evil spirits? to the deep corruption of my heart? or to some bodily disorder, which, agreeably to the laws of sympathy, must affect the mind? To whatever cause it should be attributed, surely I have much reason to be thankful that it was but a dream. And dreams are but

"————— interludes which *fancy* makes:

While monarch reason sleeps—that mimic wakes."

Praises to my God, through the day I enjoyed communion with him, and a measure of that *rest* in him which I have experienced for some weeks. In secret prayer I was allowed access, and found power to plead that nothing but the pure love of God might *dwell* in my heart. I felt a degree of languor on my animal spirits, and once or twice in the course of the day was grieved to perceive that my *manner* and *spirit* savoured of hastiness; especially when speaking of those who, I thought, were acting wrong. I hope I mourned over this, and made a fresh application to the blood of sprinkling. When shall these Canaan-

ites be driven out of the land? When shall I possess that invincible patience and meekness which no provocation can move?

March 11. Recovered a measure of comfort and strength which I had lost yesterday by not being sufficiently courageous in reproofing sin; but still I mourn for my ingratitude to that God who so uncommonly loads me with his benefits. The remains of impurity which I still feel are truly an intolerable load; and especially of late, since I have been blessed with so much nearness and delightful communion with God my Saviour. This makes me *exquisitely sensible* to the least touch of sin, and causes it to produce the most pungent sorrow. Lord, give me all that freedom from it which thy word holds out as my privilege.

Sunday 15. A day much to be remembered, wherein I enjoyed communion with my God. His joy was my strength; whereby I was enabled to wait upon him much longer than usual in his house of prayer. In going to his table, I sang his praises, feeling surrounded with his goodness. Words fail when I would tell how much of his love he showed me. I feel immersed in the ocean of divine love. Silence must speak that praise I cannot utter: the language of immortality alone can adequately express it.

April 10. Since the 5th inst. I have had another proof that the Lord is the hearer and answerer of prayer. Fearing a certain trial, I cried to him, and entreated he would make a way for my escape. His former goodness in similar cases led me to trust in him, and I was not disappointed. He has appeared for me, and made me sweetly sensible it was his own doing. This, as at other times, has produced desirable consequences—increase of love, confidence, and desire for more communion with him. For some days my joy has not been so great; my views have been clear, yet I have not felt so near; wanderings have greatly harassed me while at prayer. My heart is also pained, because I do not make greater progress in the divine life; and because I do not feel so ardently breathing after God—after *my God, my all*. How great the stupidity which hangs upon my spirit! All heaven adores THEE with a continual flame of love which burns up every other desire; all on earth is the workmanship of thy hands, from whom thou justly demandest an unceasing tribute of praise; but, especially, how ought the fire of devotion to be continually ascending from the altar of a grateful heart in all thy children! those whom thou hast redeemed, whose hearts thou hast set free and made thine by faith in Christ. How loud should be *their* notes of praise,—how *warm their love*,—how great *their* activity! What cause have I to chide my cold heart! Come, Lord, and so fill it with thy pure love, that I may not for a moment lose the warmest sense of it. What heights and depths of the love of God *are* attainable in this life!—what constant communion, what uninterrupted peace, what close walking! Of these

I have enjoyed more for some months than before ; but, O, how little in comparison with what I might, and hope to enjoy even here. Not that I believe *absolute perfection* attainable in this world ; yet I hope not always to be a babe in Christ, but by degrees to attain the strength of a young man, and then the *stability, vigour, and firmness*, of a father. This I am warranted by the word of God to expect.

“ Yet, when melted in the flame
Of love, this shall be all my plea :
“ I, the chief of sinners am,
But Jesus died for me,”

By the economy of grace all boasting is, and must be for ever excluded. “ Let him that glorieth,” says Jehovah, “ glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth *me*.” How just ! If I know myself, I would glory in nothing else. But alas ! how is my glorying in a manner made void, because I know so little of HIM,—have made such poor returns,—and because the child remains so unlike the Parent.

— 20. Still my soul feels comforted and quickened ; my mind more stayed on God, wanderings in secret fewer, and I enjoy nearer access. Met yesterday with a trial I did not expect. How often does that come upon us we looked not for ; and how seldom, on the other hand, do we smart under apprehended evils. Lord, in this, as in all other things, “ thy will be done.”

“ No cross, no suffering I decline,
Only let all my heart be thine.”

O the superlative happiness of having God our reconciled Father, and of being in any measure moulded into his will ! What a constant stream of comfort flows from this fountain. It blunts the edge of every trial, and gives the proper relish of every earthly enjoyment ; things and persons we then keep in their proper place, and God is our chief good while we “ stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free.” Indeed, if we be “ again entangled with the yoke of bondage,” and the love of the world prevail in our hearts, the love of God will soon die away, and we shall lose our relish for divine things. How necessary is it from the moment power is given us to believe on Christ, with that faith which removes condemnation and brings peace, to have always something farther in view ; to be constantly growing in grace, and going on from faith to faith. If we do not attend to this, we shall most assuredly lose ground, and again recede.

— 30. I have found a degree of uneasiness creeping into my mind, because some things were not going on agreeably to my wish. This ought not to be. I ought so to trust in the Lord, that my soul might be like Mount Sion, which cannot be moved. This naturally leads me to regret the littleness of my grace, and

makes me examine *what I have* and *what I want*. The result of this has been, especially of late, to convince me that though I have not all I wish, nor what many other Christians enjoy, yet I have much more than I am properly thankful for, or always sensible of. I find my reasons for rejoicing evermore are so great and many that I wonder any thing but sin should ever move me. I perceive it is a misfortune, if I may be allowed the expression, to be cast in too soft a mould. My nature is often deeply affected when my soul, or spiritual part, remains unmoved; and were it equally supported by the animal powers, I should enjoy much more firmness than I now do. But *this*, with every other weakness inseparably connected with humanity, will be done away when I get above. O glorious day!—transporting thought! when I, even *I*, shall be admitted to behold the beatific vision, shall see my Jesus in all his splendour,—shall see without a veil that God of whose goodness I have so largely partaken. Language and ideas fail! What mortal can express the happiness that real Christians shall then enjoy! I must leave it until I learn the language of immortality. But O, my heart ought to burn with love to the Father of mercies, who has invested me with a legal title to that glorious kingdom, by revealing his Son in my heart! I would that every moment my soul glowed with seraphic love—with heavenly ardour! O qualify me for the enjoyment of that glorious place.

May 5. Still my God is good, and has allowed me much of his presence to-day, while variously employed for the good of my own soul and that of others. Yet in the afternoon I had cause to lament my want of a greater degree of faithfulness to the Lord. He did not deprive me of the comfort I enjoyed immediately, but by degrees; soon after, reflecting upon my ingratitude, and seeing clearly *what I ought* to have done, I found it diminished. Surely there is no safe nor comfortable path to walk in, but that of duty. This is a matter of fact, and I find it confirmed by daily experience. People may amuse themselves, if they dare, by thinking and saying the gospel brings such a liberty with it as invests the children of God with a discretionary power to *do*, or to *leave undone*, as they choose: but of one thing I am morally certain, if they would preserve their hearts right with God, and their consciences be properly informed, they will not enjoy uninterrupted peace if they take the liberty either to omit any duty, or to do those things the Spirit of God condemns. A liberty purchased at this expense is the very worst kind of bondage. How absurd, then, to brand a conscientious discharge of duty with the odious name of *legality*. If we do, we must consequently quarrel with all the prohibitions, and injunctions, and exhortations, we meet with in the oracles of truth. If I know any thing of true liberty, it is to love my God and to avoid sin. This is the liberty of the gospel, and a

glorious one it is. May the Lord enable me and all his people to walk in it.

May 26. For the last eight days it has been a season of severe inward trial; these generally are the heaviest. To add to my sufferings, my body was afflicted; and for many hours my mind was so harassed, and so stupid, I could not fix it for two minutes on divine things. I am thankful this last complaint was not suffered long to remain. The Lord in mercy removed my pains, cleared my views, and inclined me to cry unto him: and though I had not much comfort, yet underneath I felt the everlasting arms secretly supporting me, yea, strengthening me to overcome. He is a gracious God, and will not suffer his children to be tempted above what they are able. No, he has promised to "give strength to his people: the Lord will bless his people with peace." I cannot set my seal to the truth of this precious promise: but yet, to satisfy my mind fully, I want a farther degree of light with regard to his will concerning me in some things. I feel a constant fear of yielding to my *own*, and a dread lest I should mistake *his*. Surely he must have wrought me to this self-same thing,—will he then suffer me greatly to err, either in principle or in practice? No—man in this case, sinful as he is, would not; far less a gracious God.

June 25. I have taken up too much time and thought to-day with temporal things, which has a little interrupted my close communion with the Father of mercies. O for power not only to *live* but to *walk* in the Spirit. I have now entirely given up to the Lord what has engrossed too much of my thoughts and conversation for two days past. I believe it is from himself, and therefore hope he will succeed it. How narrow is the way we are called to walk in, would we enjoy constant communion with God! Yet I believe it consistent with every lawful situation and occupation in life. Though necessarily employed in outward things, still, through grace, the heart may be at liberty continually to attend to an indwelling God. This will naturally lead us to watch in all things; but without a measure of this recollected, watchful spirit, it is impossible to walk closely with God. I have been more injured lately for want of a greater degree of this, than for some time back. With it, I experimentally know we may retain in the midst of worldly employments a constant sense of the divine presence.

July 20. (Sunday.) Slept but little through the night; rose very early; spent some hours in secret with the Lord, and found access to him. But how shall I express his goodness to me through the day. It was indeed one of the days of the Son of man: the waters of the sanctuary were as a great river; I could indeed adopt the language of St. John, "Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." In several things I had the petitions I asked of him. "The joy of the

Lord was my strength," for I felt no weariness, neither want of food ; this not only at the Lord's table, but also through the day.

— 21. As soon as I awoke this morning, I enjoyed free access to God ; this continued all day : wherever I went I found him ; in public, in private, and in secret. Whence is this to me, that my God should deal so bountifully with an unfaithful, unfruitful creature. I feel so utterly unable to tell of all his goodness, or to express my gratitude ; all I can say falls so short of what I would and ought to say, that it leads me sometimes to give over attempting it, and in silence to admire and adore that depth of love which I *feel*, but cannot comprehend. May I go many days in the strength of this meal. But, O my God, I do not mean so as to receive no more for some time. No, I want every moment the intercourse open between thee and my soul : that I may be constantly drawing out of thy fulness grace for grace, till thou shalt receive my happy spirit home ; and even then I shall live only by the continual emanations of thy love to my soul. While in this vale of tears, O encircle me every moment in the arms of divine love—*there only* am I safe.

— 30. My spiritual joy has sensibly abated for some days ; "yet I will trust in the Lord, and stay myself upon my God." Not that I am walking in darkness, only when I reflect on the deep and close communion I enjoyed with him lately, I now seem comparatively at a distance. The bare recalling of the happy time to mind has often since in a measure renewed it :— "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me ; and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father ; and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him." This scripture promises a permanent rest and happiness : there is no interruption mentioned as unavoidable. And yet many good people, I do not know why, have received it as a proposition quite conclusive, that while in this world we must be as unstable as water. It is generally said the arguments drawn from experience are most satisfactory. Were I to admit this, and argue merely from what my experience has hitherto been, it would certainly lead to the adoption of the above opinion. But if the generality of Christians live much beneath what the word of God describes as their privileges, must I thence infer it is impossible to live up to them ? I cannot think the conclusion would be just, especially as I can see no foundation for such an opinion in the oracles of truth. Therefore, I would not permit *their* experience to have much influence in determining my judgment, concerning the *degrees* of grace attainable in this life. The Lord knows I do not here speak as one who has already attained, but rather as one who is deeply conscious that as yet exceedingly little is attained. Yet I believe that, in spite of the numberless infirmities inseparably connected with flesh and blood, God is both able and willing to make me "rejoice ever-

more, pray without ceasing, and in every thing to give thanks." At the same time, I believe that no degree of grace can exempt us from being very sensible of a difference at one time from another, as it respects the *measures* of spiritual comfort and joy.

August 7. (Friday.) From indisposition of body was prevented using that degree of *abstinence* I generally do on this day; not from any superstitious regard to *Friday*, more than any other day; only I find it profitable to set *one day* apart for more special acts of dedication. Was sensible of an increase of life and power. In the evening enjoyed much profitable conversation, and found a blessing both in social and secret prayer. Inward trials and temptations have been stronger than usual. What a burden do I still feel the remains of indwelling sin. Lord, give me all the liberty I can enjoy in this life.

— 8. Still I groan, being burdened. And yet what a mystery—I every moment, more or less, behold the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ: I never lose sight of a reconciled God. O what cause for thanks. What a great support must this prove under every pressure; unquestionably it is: yet here is no contradiction. I believe the clearer my views of divine objects *are*, and the closer my communion with God *is*, the more exquisite will be my sensibility of sin. What grief does it give, to feel any thing in me contrary to the God of love. How does it cut me to the heart, that I should ever grieve his patient and good Spirit. In the evening went to the chapel, and heard a sermon from "Little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming." Toward the end of the service, my soul felt agonizing with desire and expectation for a blessing; while singing these lines,—

"Give, give me all my soul requires,
All, all that is in thee."

I felt as if grasping all that heaven could bestow.

— 14. This has been a day of sweet serenity and unutterable peace. I feel at a loss to express my enjoyments under a sermon at five in the morning. The Lord was present; the word came with power; I felt surrounded with his goodness, as Jerusalem is said to be with mountains. My soul was fed with manna and fatness. I felt more firmly persuaded than ever that the Lord would not suffer me to be tempted above what I am able. How good to wait upon God: he has been at my right hand all day, and my communion with Jesus has been near and delightful. What I lament is, that my conformity still remains so comparatively small. O that I could extirpate every foe he has in my breast. But, alas! I have no might against this great army. It is his own work, and, Lord, my eyes are unto thee for deliverance. How comfortable to know that, though

my enemies are *potent*, HE is *omnipotent*; though they are *mighty*, HE is *almighty*.

September 24. The lessons I have been learning for some time past have been, *First*, To endeavour to keep the eye of my soul steadily fixed upon the Lord Jesus, as the only way to obtain whatever I want; and to be preserved from wanderings and unprofitable reasonings. *Secondly*, To cry without intermission to the Lord for purity, that I may be more fully qualified to act for God. When it will be for thy glory, enlarge my sphere of usefulness, and continue my constant desires of doing thy will: O let me not lose any opportunity my present situation affords. Show me, Lord, if I am cutting off all superfluities, and unnecessary expense in apparel, furniture, &c., &c. Surely this is a privilege; yet not esteemed so by nature: it loves what is new, grand, elegant, extravagant. I did so as well as others, till He who is rich in mercy opened my eyes and showed me a more excellent way. Yet I fall short. Were salvation by works, I should be undone: eternal praises to God it is by grace, through faith.

For some time death has worn an amiable aspect; I have almost longed to get away. Nothing checks this desire so much as a hope to do something for God before I die: except *this*, I have nothing to do *here*. The world to me has lost its charms: I see through the veil; it is too thin to hide the cheat. In God alone is my comfort: Jesus is the only source of my consolation. I am pained by the *righteous*, as well as distressed by the *wicked*. The former are so torn by prejudice, faction, and party spirit:—the latter, so awfully dishonour the God I love. Lord, see the ways of both, and heal them.

October 12. This morning had the clear witness of God's Spirit with mine, that I stood accepted through the Beloved. This animates and invigorates the soul in all her combats with sin, Satan, and the world. Faith is indeed a precious gift. How mysterious in its nature, and in its workings! What a new world does it lay open to the eye of a believer! What glories does it display! But, above all, how inconceivably, yet certainly and sweetly, does it unite the soul to Jesus; producing a relation and connection much nearer and dearer than any earthly one. O Jesus, what constant source of consolation art thou to my soul!

— 24. Have been confined by sickness. The rod was gentle, but I am never laid on a sick bed without being convinced I have not sufficient grace for that situation. Ever since the Lord gave me a relish for divine things, I have had a desire to be continually employed for him. When confined I seem to be laid aside from this delightful work, which depresses my mind, and often robs me of that degree of comfort I might otherwise enjoy. Now surely this is an evil, and bespeaks me defective in point of resignation. Yet, so gracious is God, he generally

brings good out of it, by stimulating me to cry more earnestly for that measure of grace which shall alike enable me to be devoted to him in sickness as in health, in adversity as in prosperity. In the course of this last illness I felt at times so ardent in prayer for this that it almost seemed more than my feeble frame could bear.

November 25. My soul has been exceedingly sorrowful for some weeks. I think I have not experienced such deep and variegated distress since I knew the Lord. My inward conflicts have been very severe, I was truly in agony of soul, and many outward things concurred to aggravate my affliction. What adds a pungency to my sorrow is the unusual workings of a proud heart and an unsubdued will ; neither of which is willing to stoop to the present cross. My whole soul feels as if in confusion. My God, let not the spirit fail before thee. O speak this storm into a calm.

“Omnipotent Lord, my Saviour and King,
Thy succour afford, thy righteousness bring :
Thy promises bind thee compassion to have,
Now, now let me find thee almighty to save.”

— 30. I now take up my pen to record the mercy of my God, who has looked upon my affliction, and in some measure removed it. In my distress I cried unto the Lord, and he heard and delivered me. He calmed the tumult of my soul, and said to the raging billows and roaring waves, “Peace, be still.” Bless the Lord, O my soul.

December 24. Through the abounding goodness of my God, my inward conflicts have been less severe for this last week than for months past ; and I have enjoyed a measure of communion with the Father and the Son, in company and when alone, in prayer and meditation. Yet I have had the pressure of many outward things, and sometimes fears lest my inward quietness was owing to want of ardour in the pursuit of divine objects. I am morally certain that my faith is stronger, my views clearer, and my enjoyment of the sweet intimations of the favour of God more lively : only I think I do not possess that painful earnestness of spirit which I have experienced. Lord, let me never rest but in the full enjoyment of thyself.

This year is now drawing near to a close, and I feel a painful conviction that I have made comparatively but small progress in the divine life. O that before it ends the Lord would come and finish the work begun in me, and let me enter into the rest of perfect love. Lord, hear the prayer of thy handmaid.

— 31. I have repeatedly to-day renewed my engagements to be the Lord's, in time and to all eternity. At night heard a sermon on “Arise, and depart, for this is not your rest.” While attending to it, the Lord shone upon his work on my soul. My

interest in Jesus was as clear as if written in the most legible characters.

"Meridian evidence puts doubt to flight,
And conquering faith anticipates the skies."

O wherefore is the Deity so kind ! Astonishing beyond astonishment ! Heaven our reward above, for heaven enjoyed below !

CHAPTER VIII.—1773.

Diary continued.

Jan. 1. And is the former year gone—*gone*, never to be recalled ! Where is it ? Lost in the ocean of eternity ! Awful thought ! Not so the deeds I have done in the course of it : *they* are faithfully recorded in the divine register. O my soul, how wouldst thou blush at the recital, were it not for the blood of Jesus. *Blush*, did I say ? alas ! how confounded wouldst thou rather be ! In it would be found ten thousand times more than enough to condemn thee to all eternity, were it not that Jesus stands between the Father's wrath and thee. O "Jesus my hope, for me offered up," how shall I,—how can I sufficiently praise thee ! I lament the coldness of my heart. I would it were ever burning, seraphlike, with love to thee ; but, alas ! how insensible is it to that vast love that "thee inclined to bleed and die for me !" O for more love !

I awoke, and got up very early to begin the year with my immortal Friend ; but through affliction of body was prevented going to his house, yet the Lord made it a sweet day to me.

— 19. For these two weeks past, I have had cause every day to bless the Lord for his goodness to me. The additional power given me some time ago to rely on him for the accomplishment of his promise still continues ; to which is united a measure of faith, love, and zeal for the glory of my God and the salvation of others. This last week he has afforded me delightful communion with himself in secret prayer, meditation, and conversation. I also experience that Christ is more and more precious. I seem to see more than ever the immense value of his blood, as a fountain to which I am permitted to have daily and hourly recourse, for the removal of fresh-contracted guilt ; for continual shortcomings, and for farther degrees of sanctification. O Jesus, in thee is all I want—but for thee, and my interest in thy complete atonement, *where* should I appear,—or *how* should I appear ! Confusion would for ever cover me and my best deeds. In *thee* alone is all my hope and all my comfort. Of late, my heart leaps for joy at the very mention of the name of Jesus. I can truly say,

"Jesus, thy blood and righteousness,
My beauty are, my glorious dress."

O how cordially does my soul approve of the whole plan of salvation; but still I grieve daily for my unfaithfulness, unfruitfulness, unwatchfulness; these three evils are a source of much sorrow to me.

— 26. For these seven days past I have experienced, in various ways, the goodness of my God. The means which he has most blessed has been secret prayer: *this* I prove a holy preservative against the many snares of an evil world. By *it* I am fortified, and in some measure enabled to bear the trials which are constantly occurring in common life. There is no situation in life exempt from trials. To be "from things that disquiet free," is incompatible with a state of humanity. To suffer so as to glorify God is all we can ask or expect. Some weeks ago I found meditation the way in which I enjoyed most of the presence of the Lord; but he varies this as his wisdom sees best. I have felt the pressure of several trials for a long time, but have been allowed to cast my burthen on God; and, especially of late, he has given me an increase of power to trust in him. My faith in the promises is also sensibly strengthened; but still I lack that degree of it which would enable me to lay *present* hold of them: yet I believe "He that shall come, will come, and will not tarry." This forenoon I found Christian conversation and prayer truly blessed. The Beloved of my soul drew nigh, and comforted me, and others with me. Several opportunities also occurred for the good of others, which the Lord enabled me to embrace; O that he may bless them. He is very gracious in this respect, and as he knows I am prone to be discouraged, he sometimes condescends to let me know that good is done by my feeble efforts; this animates and encourages me to renew my attempts. I seem to be in my element when acting in any way for God. My soul truly desires to be wholly His; but, O, how far am I from this. For some days I have enjoyed a calm abstracted frame of mind—free from creatures—cleaving to God.

Feb. 14. (Friday.) Endeavoured to set this day apart, as usual, for prayer, abstinence, and self-examination. Upon the whole it was profitable, though not remarkably joyful. This last week the Lord Jesus has drawn very near to me, and wonderfully manifested his presence; so that I have seen and conversed with him as a man with his friend: yet these visits of love were but short. O to have them more abiding! Were I more holy, I should enjoy more of God. It is *this*, (when we are accepted through the Beloved,) which capacitates our nature for the enjoyment of Him. The pure in heart see God. My soul desires holiness, but, alas! how little of it do I possess. I have cause to be thankful that my evidences of justification

remain satisfactory, but this is not enough; I pant for the full image of God.

— 25. The accomplishment of a gracious promise on which God had enabled me to trust, appeared very nigh—just at hand. I have looked almost every moment for it, yet when attempting to lay hold of it I have found a painful inability and impotence. God only can give power to believe so as to enable us to possess any promised blessing. All is from above—nothing is left for human boasting. Lord, I desire it should be so: I delight to give thee all the glory. O then magnify thy mercy above all thy Name. I still feel wanderings in secret, though not so many as last week, and also fear my communion with God has not been so close for some days past as usual; yet I thirst to glorify him in every possible way. I feel, in this time of almost universal defection, much drawn out in desire and prayer, to be enabled and honoured to confess God; to bear my testimony against the sins of the times, by my lips, from my heart, and in my life. May God give me power so to do. He favours me, even in my narrow sphere of action, with many opportunities daily to act for him, and causes me to delight in being so employed. If he accept my *mite*, it is great condescension; I ask no other reward. He knows, if I had all, I would, through his grace, give him all; but, alas! I have nothing. What shall I render unto Him who has done so much for me! Lord, show me, if I can do any thing for thee; thou often work-est by the weakest instruments. Lord, here am I, send me; but O direct my every step. At present, I am perplexed with regard to some temporal affairs, and fear to trust my own judgment, and even that of others, lest I should mistake the Lord's will concerning me: O my God, cause light to arise. I give up all to thee, do thou guide me in all things, by thy unerring counsel, in the way that shall bring most glory to thee, profit to others and to myself.

March 9. When speaking of the Lord's goodness to me this forenoon, I sensibly felt the divine life increasing in my soul, and was enabled to believe he will do great things for me. In the same moment my spiritual foes made a fresh attack upon me; but I felt sweetly resigned to suffer all my God should permit them to do; and was forcibly persuaded he would give strength according to my day, and fully perfect what concerns me. I often find, when ready to be discouraged with outward and inward trials, I am instantaneously lifted up and comforted. Surely this must be from my invisible Friend, the Lover of my soul. O that I had a deeper sense of my mercies, and of my infinite obligations to Jesus Christ. That this may be the case, O Lord, reveal thyself more fully.

— 11. These two days experienced rather a degree of languor on my mind, and feared lest I should take rest in the

degree of freedom I had obtained from the fiery darts of Satan. I cried unto the Lord to prevent *this*, for of all states I dread a *lukewarm one*. In the evening, went to the house of God, where the enemy tried in an uncommon way to afflict me; but he overshot his mark. I was for a few minutes distressed, but quickly my God came to my relief, and poured the consolations of his Spirit into my soul in an abundant manner. How good is God! and how malicious is Satan! but he is a chained enemy, and those who believe in Jesus shall triumph over him.

— 16. Opportunities of various kinds have crowded upon me wherein to act for God: with desire I have attempted to embrace them, and have found comfort in it. My soul constantly thirsts to glorify God, and those are my happiest moments which are thus consecrated to him. O to be able to fill up all my time with and for him! I hope I am always employed in what has either an immediate or remote tendency to glorify him; though still, alas! how much time I comparatively trifle away. O that I could learn to redeem time: Lord, teach me. Jesus to-day appeared very nigh and clear to the eye of faith; but my soul is grieved for want of more fervour in secret prayer. I do not agonize and wrestle Jacoblike, and I am also distressed with wanderings. Lord, cure these evils!

— 29. For the last week have felt much as usual, only not so much *joy*, yet my evidences of justification are clear, through mercy very clear, and I also possess a grateful sense of it. I constantly prove *this* a great support under distresses of various kinds. Lord, thy goodness is great to me in this respect. O for equal clearness in my evidences for sanctification. Of late, I feel painfully convinced that I do not pray enough: Lord, give me a spirit of prayer and supplication. I have taken some steps in an affair which as yet is only in embryo—a larger attempt in the way of doing something for God than I have as yet tried. O that he may succeed it. If my heart do not deceive me, his glory and the good of my fellow creatures are my motives: of the two, I find the former proves the stronger stimulative. What an honour to be permitted to act for God. Lord, thou knowest this is my highest ambition.

April 5. (Sunday.) In coming home from the house of God, Jesus felt intimately nigh. He seemed as if hovering over me with eyes of tenderness and love, while the silent language of my heart was, “I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, that ye stir not up, nor awake my love till he please.” I constrained my Lord to abide with me. I found HE was *all in all* to me; I felt deeply convinced that nothing but divine love could wean us entirely from the world; but that a fulness of it would effectually do this. It is a good so infinitely superior to any thing the world has to offer, that, with an omnipotent sweetness, our judgments are convinced, while our affections are wholly capti-

vated. O to feel it ever thus! This is indeed very desirable; yet the heart may be right with God when there is not such an overpowering sense of this conviction present to the mind: but I am conscious I do not sufficiently advert to this. I am too much affected with the alternation of my *frames*; when I believe it is partly owing either to the body, or the strong effect of powerful temptation.

— 11. I have cause to say the mercies of my God are new every morning, yet there are seasons when he more richly displays his glory in Jesus Christ:—increasing my communion with himself, and making his love flow more plentifully into my soul. But at *all times*, however tempted or tried, in great condescension, his Spirit bears witness with mine that through the Son of his love he is reconciled to me. According to his gracious promise, he does more and more establish me herein; especially when most on the stretch for sanctification: *then* it is the divine witness shines with peculiar brightness. Lord, how infinitely am I indebted to thy free grace! O for a heart continually flaming with love to thee. At times a languor overspreads the surface of my soul, which frequently diminishes my spiritual joy; but as JESUS CHRIST, and *not joy*, is the *foundation* of my hope, I am still, through grace, enabled to hold fast my confidence. But this also is the gift of God, and he makes me deeply sensible of it; and that every grain of faith, love, hope, joy, &c., &c., comes from *him*, and is *maintained* by *him*. I have nothing but what *he gives* me; I am nothing but what *he makes* me; and I rejoice that it is so. I want more and more to lose sight of *self* and *confidence* in *myself*, and to *trust in the Lord alone*. He still continues my ardent desires to promote his glory, and affords frequent opportunities in which to act for him; with power cheerfully to embrace them; and this not from *legal* or *selfish* motives, but from love to my God.

— 14. Again this morning my God made his goodness to pass before me. When I awoke, these words spontaneously flowed from my lips several times:—"Seek the Lord, and his strength; seek his face evermore." When I arose, the curtain of mortality seemed drawn aside, and I got a Mount Pisgah view of my heavenly inheritance. My soul appeared to mount up on the wings of faith and love, and beheld all the good land. By faith I saw my God, and sweetly viewed him as my Father, with whom I should be to all eternity, when a little more time on earth had elapsed. I would have gone immediately up to him, and no longer on this side Jordan stopped. How cheerfully could I have bid adieu to all below. But, Lord, thy time is best. Quickly after this glorious manifestation, lest I should have been exalted above measure, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, but in it I saw the goodness and wisdom of my God. Yet how amazing is human frailty! I found it brought a degree of heavi-

ness into my soul. How easily am I affected. Lord, wholly subdue my will. If it were lost in thine, all would be alike. O forgive my weakness. Through the day, experienced much sweetness and liberty in secret and social prayer. When at the throne of grace in private, just before dinner, I was favoured with a small degree of that rich display of future glory I saw in the morning, and was made sensible it was for *me*. Amazing, stupendous mercy! O the heights and depths of redeeming love! O to be lost in the glorious abyss!

— 21. For some time after my last date the power of the enemy was restrained, and I had peace in all my borders; enjoying a measure of the love of my God, and strong faith in Christ: but after that Satan was permitted to try and tempt me in a way I have not felt for some years. I saw the cloven foot, yet could not, from the nature of the temptation, avoid being distressed. After two days thus suffering, the Lord rebuked the adversary, and there was a calm; *this* brought with it a temptation of another kind, a fear of a Laodicean spirit. O Lord, deliver me from this foe, make and keep me active. Trial succeeds to trial. We must endure the cross in one way or another: it is a piece of necessary discipline in this state of probation. In *all*, I want from my heart to be able to say continually, "Thy will be done." In entire resignation to the divine will lies the true happiness of man. But nothing, except the all-transforming power of sovereign grace, can effect *this*; by nature we are as prone to follow our own will as the sparks to fly upward.

— 29. Endeavoured to strengthen the hands of some of the Lord's people, who were variously exercised; though I needed rather to be comforted myself; but in attempting to assist others I am assisted myself. I have often observed that, however distressing my own situation, if an opportunity offered to glorify God by doing good to others, especially spiritual good, my own distress was for the time suspended, and I was enabled to speak as if going on my way rejoicing; but when the occasion was over my own distress has frequently returned. Surely this also must be of God, for by nature we are prone to sink under trials, and inclined to complain when speaking to others. I am certain I can never have good cause to complain of God. If in any, or in many ways I am exercised, it is for some wise end; and besides, I know I have deserved to suffer much more. I have always reason, therefore, to speak good of the Lord to others, and thereby encourage them to go on in seeking and serving him. At times his people may be in heaviness through manifold temptations, but never without a *needs-be* to justify it; and still the ways of wisdom are ways of pleasantness, all her paths are paths of peace.

May 12. The last week I have endured what seemed to my weak spirits a great fight of affliction, which still continues, and

has to-day considerably increased. I desire to do and to suffer all the will of my God ; but, though the spirit is willing, the flesh is weak. Never, since I knew the Lord, have I had at the same time such a complication of trials. What adds greatly to my distress is a want of power to bear them with a becoming firmness of mind. For a short time I possess this, but when trials press hard upon me I again lose it, and then I suffer most acutely. Yet I believe that deliverance will come—that all shall work for my good—that my God does all things well, and that I shall yet have cause to praise him. The surface of my soul is often furiously agitated : but I bless the Father of mercies, who enables me, though tempted, to hold Jesus by faith. And though I am encompassed with variegated outward and inward trials, my heart constantly thirsts to glorify God, and he enables me to embrace the opportunities which occur.

— 18. Taking my eye of faith a little this morning off the Lord Jesus, and giving way to foolish reasoning, I involved my soul in distress. While we steadily look to him, all is well, and no trial proves too strong : we walk with ease, and without fear, over the tempestuous sea of life ; but whenever we look down to the yielding wave we begin to sink, and are tossed to and fro : O to be preserved from such folly. Enjoyed, this forenoon, the benefit of Christian fellowship, by which my soul was strengthened. I bless God, amid all my trials I find myself solidly fixed on Jesus as the sure foundation, and my mind is in a measure stayed upon the Lord.

— 21. (Friday.) A day in general sacred to the interests of my own soul and others, and the cause of God. In the forenoon enjoyed much time alone, but trials so abounded, and their weight so increased, that I seemed pressed down under their load, and could see no way of deliverance. I endeavoured, by repeated prayer and meditation, to cast all my care on the Lord ; to justify him in all his dealings with me ; to stir up my soul to trust in Him who had hitherto been with me in the fire and in the water, and often delivered me ; and I felt a degree of power to stay my soul upon him, and also to hope he would make a way for my escape. I enjoy at present, in spite of the sable curtain which seems to be cast over all my concerns, a secret hope, almost a persuasion, that the womb of Providence is pregnant with some events of great importance to me. May I in every situation, whether prosperous or adverse, be enabled to glorify God, and to suffer all his righteous will.

June 2. Still the Lord is conducting me through the fire and through the water, though I dare not say he leaves me comfortless. At times the consolations of his Spirit flow sweetly into my soul, and my spirit cleaves to God in faith, believing he will order all things well. At other times the enemy obtains an advantage over me, and musters before me in dread array all my

present difficulties; and adds many apprehended ones to the number. He suggests also that the Lord deals hardly with me, and that his promises will perhaps fail. It is thus he subtly works upon remaining corruption, and raises a mighty storm in my soul, so that I am almost driven to my wits' end. Nothing quells the tumult but a fresh act of self-dedication, and an endeavour to fix the eye of faith upon the Lord Jesus. I feel more and more that carnal reasoning is an enemy to the work of God in the soul, yet to this I have been more tempted of late than for a long time. There is one good effect I experience from my present trying situation; I see more than ever the value of the Bible, obtain more comfort from it, and from the prayers of the saints. I am still tried at times with wanderings in prayer, with impatience, and self-will. I groan to be delivered. Formerly a weak body pressed down my soul, but for some time a distressed mind has much affected my body.

July 1. Since the twelfth of June I have had much affliction of body. The Lord chastened me, but I was not given over unto death. O that the rod may answer the gracious designs of my heavenly Father. In the course of my illness I had not much comfort: at times, the Lord drew nigh, refreshed my soul, and composed my spirit; but at other seasons, through the pressure of my disorder, I was unable to lift up my heart in the exercise of faith and prayer; when I did, the Lord was at my right hand. Since I have been raised up, the Father of mercies has allowed me a large measure of the consolations of his Spirit; yet he permits me to be exercised with various trials. O that in a more sensible manner I felt them bringing forth the fruits of righteousness! My privileges are great, but still I have to lament my progress is small. Lord, quicken my tardy pace, for the glory of thy great name.

— 23. I have experienced since my last date a sensible increase of communion with my God, with a deep consciousness of my unworthiness in every respect. He has graciously kept me in the trying hour, delivered me from giving way to evil reasoning and unbelief, allowed me also many sweet seasons in secret and social prayer, and has blessed in a measure the means of grace. But, O, how unfaithful am I, and how unfruitful! A constant sense of my shortcomings abides with me, though often, through the goodness of God, without condemnation, yea, sometimes with a strong sense of his love. O the depths of divine grace! What cause have I to say,

“Depth of mercy! can there be
Mercy still reserved for me!
Can my God his wrath forbear?
Me, the chief of sinners, spare?”

The Lord has in mercy removed some of the trials with which I have been so long exercised; but has permitted others to suc-

ceed them, the most unexpected. Keep me, keep me, gracious God, and never let me go. Since last night I felt a degree of unbelief which threatened to make dreadful havoc in my soul; but I cried to my God with strong cries, and he graciously interposed. Who is a God like unto our God, who passes by the transgressions of the remnant of his people. But I am vile, I abhor myself.

August 26. For the last three weeks I have been travelling for the benefit of my health. During that period I have seen and experienced much of the goodness of the Lord, and much of my own weakness and proneness to depart from the living God. Have endured strong temptations and trials, and have not been so faithful as I ought to have been; this has proved a source of much and keen distress. Lord, what is man! What am I! how wretched, poor, and miserable in myself. Even after all thou hast done for me, how unable to withstand the smallest temptation! Yet, in spite of all my unworthiness, how gracious is my God! At times, on the road, heaven itself seemed to be open: I might ask what I would. My communion with my God was near and delightful, and my union with Jesus intimate. On reflection, I seemed to have been employed rather in *enjoying* than in *hungering* after more. This spiritual feast was soon succeeded by a flood of temptations and trials, where, alas, I failed: yet the Lord did not cast me off, but sweetly melted down my heart with a godly sorrow for sin, and poured his love into my soul. O the goodness of God!

— 18. For the last two weeks I have been tried without intermission; yet have had many delightful moments, in which my God has been very near, and my Jesus very precious. Indeed I have it to say, to the glory of free grace, that I every moment behold God reconciled, through the Son of his love: though the degrees of sensible comfort and nearness to him greatly vary. I often feel such fiery darts from the enemy of my soul as almost terrify me: at other times, future trials are represented in such frightful colours that for a short time they fearfully unhinge me. In all these distresses, real or imaginary, I find no cure but in looking simply to Jesus, and cleaving close to him; but *then* he supports and comforts me. The Lord has condescended to show me his will in a most astonishing manner, respecting one of my trials. But, alas! what shall I say? when the Lord has showed me his will I seem not to have power to comply: all within would oppose it. The struggle is great between a strong desire to sacrifice *all*, and *obey* my God; and an ardent desire to act so, in all things, as to secure the approbation of the thinking and judicious part of mankind. But, Lord, if thou call me to give *this* up, yea, to forsake *all* and follow thee, Abrahamlike, I would cheerfully obey.

October 8. Endeavoured to set apart this day entirely for the

concerns of my soul, but was not relieved of my present load ; I mean various trials pressing hard upon me. On the contrary, my distress was greatly heightened by *those* from whom I expected help. O my God, I desire to say, in the midst of all, thou doest all things well. If I suffer, it is surely needful, and less than I deserve. O sanctify my troubles, and when thou seest meet remove them : only let me not be tried above what I am able, neither suffer me to mistake thy will. I commit myself and all my concerns into thy hands. O enable me to possess my soul in patience, until thou sendest deliverance. Be not thou a God afar off in the day of trouble, but nigh at hand, for thy great name's sake. The troubles of my heart are enlarged, O bring thou me out of my distresses. Remember thy precious promises. Let it not displease thee that I plead them with thee ; I would bind thee with the girdle of thy own faithfulness. How mysterious are the ways of Providence. His paths are in the deep waters, his footsteps are not known. He giveth to none, account of his matters. Though not permitted to doubt of the favour of God, and having, besides, many precious promises on which to rely, I feel at present, like Jonah, as if in the belly of hell : so tempted, so tried, so tossed, so perplexed, so surrounded with mountains of difficulties ! Lord, clothe me with the whole Christian armour, that I may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all to stand.

November 15. Felt unwell this morning, but was blessed in social prayer and Christian conversation. I was greatly animated, and all this day my expectations have been great respecting the accomplishment of some precious promises. I seem to have had at times a foretaste of the happiness I hope soon to enjoy. Surely my God is near, and he will turn again my captivity. I have expected every time I have gone to prayer that he would burst my remaining bonds asunder, and deliver me out of the hands of my enemies, that I may henceforward serve him in true holiness, without fear, all the days of my life. Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly.

December 18. The Lord has been gracious this week in restraining my enemies, and allowing me a measure of communion with himself ; in blessing his word in reading, and by inclining me in every possible way to act for him. He has indeed made this a very comfortable day. In the morning I was tried, and for a moment I was ready to yield, but quick as lightning came the Lord to my assistance. I endeavoured to give the cause of the trial to himself ; he comforted me, and has removed it. How tenderly does he deal with his children. He also to-day strengthened my hands by my helping others in different ways, especially in conversation and social prayer. In the former, when speaking of the Lord's second coming, he made me to rejoice with joy unspeakable ; and while employed in the latter,

I was made to mount up on the wings of faith and love : God the Father felt benignly nigh. The joy of the Lord in a peculiar manner, this week, has been my strength. I have walked up and down in his name, rejoicing for the consolation. He has heard my prayers, and answered them, both for myself and others. On Tuesday I asked earnestly his comfortable presence, when intending to meet with a few Christian friends for prayer and religious conversation ; and he was unspeakably gracious to us all. O how good is God ! But Satan has varied his temptations. When much distressed in body and mind on many accounts, he tempted me to *despondency* and *unbelief* ; now that the Lord is gracious, and has enlarged my borders in a spiritual way, he tempts me to *self-approbation*. But my soul abhors the thought : the Lord has made me as fearful of this abomination as of hell itself ; nay, more. I have cried to the Lord against it ; I have repeatedly fled to the blood of Jesus, and endeavoured to lie very low before my God, and the force of the temptation is abated.

— 29. For some time the Lord has been exceedingly gracious unto me. Last week he made me walk more immediately in his presence : appealing to him for what I did and left undone. My fellowship, in a *low degree*, was with the Father and the Son. My love to secret prayer, and power to abide in it more than usual, still continues ; and though I do not always obtain immediate answers, I reap generally the fruit of it afterward ; by finding, when with others, a power to keep my mind stayed upon God, to hold communion with him, and ability to converse with profit ; it also keeps me more sensible of his presence wherever I am. He has of late condescended to bless serious conversation on religious subjects to my own soul and others ; and also afforded me many opportunities to act for him, by doing good to my fellowcreatures. *This*, I thank God, is still my *element* ; not from any expectation of gaining heaven by it—that I know is the alone purchase of the blood of Jesus, but from a more noble principle—love to Jesus, and a desire to glorify God. I would that all I have and am were devoted to him. Yesterday the Lord taught me a useful lesson. I had gone to his house with large expectations ; and after waiting upon him in the use of the means, without feeling more of his power or love than I had brought with me, I grew dissatisfied, and felt a fear lest I should lose what I already possessed : immediately I felt a deep conviction that it was my duty and privilege to cleave as close to God when *dry* and *barren*, as when *full* of divine consolation. *This*, as if coming from *above*, penetrated to the centre of my heart, and brought with it a power to comply which led me to hope it was from God, and it has in some measure abode with me until now.

CHAPTER IX.—1774.

Remarks on Providence—Diary continued.

DURING several months of the last and present year, and indeed at different periods of her life, Lady M. appears to have been greatly exercised, by being called to pass under dark and mysterious dispensations of Providence. She was habitually accustomed to adore Jehovah in his government of the world. She firmly believed that every event, small as well as great, was subject to his sovereign management and control; that the operations of his hands extended to all the minute circumstances of her life; and, therefore, gratefully relied upon the consolatory declaration, "The very hairs of your head are all numbered." This, with her, as we shall have frequent opportunity to observe, was not an idle speculation, but a practical principle. She, therefore, diligently sought to know the will of God; not only as it related to the interests of her soul, but also to the arrangement of her temporal concerns; by studying his word; by persevering in prayer; by attending to the indications of his providence; and, in short, by acknowledging him in all her ways. Yet, at different seasons, she was permitted to wander through a tedious night of providential darkness, before she received the accomplishment of the promise, "He shall direct thy paths." It is in this way the Lord frequently "trieth the righteous," and calls into exercise their patience, their fidelity, their fortitude, their resignation. Yet his promise cannot fail; if they endure as seeing Him who is invisible, he will bring them forth as pure gold. The Christian believer should, therefore, never despond; should never give way, no not for a moment, to dishonourable thoughts of God. Though all around be gloomy and portentous, though not a single ray of light dart across his path, yet let him remember that all is under the guidance and direction of that almighty Being who has never once failed to deliver his people out of all their troubles.*

* The following judicious and practical remarks on this sublime subject, by a Lutheran divine, (vide *Sohnii Op.*, tom. ii. art. 19, de providentia,) deserve the most serious attention. "Providence displays the wisdom, goodness, power, and other attributes of God; we should therefore study his perfections in it. The providence of God governs us with cool and consummate wisdom and goodness; we should therefore avoid all rash censures of it. God governs us with uncontrollable power; we should not therefore attempt to resist his government, as if we would *provoke the Lord to jealousy*, by pretending to be *stronger than he*. God governs by means; we should therefore neither *tempt him* by neglecting to use them, nor vainly abuse them to superstitious purposes. God extends his providential care over the most minute objects; therefore we should avoid anxious solicitude, and rely upon him for a supply of all our wants. Since, in providence, all instruments are to us only what it pleases God to make them, we should

January 17. Upon a review, as usual, of the past year, I found it had been a time of great trial from various quarters, and also of great consolation. Upon the whole, I had reason to conclude that I had made some small advances in the divine life : but when I considered the privileges which I had enjoyed, I saw much cause to be ashamed that I had attained no farther. I endeavoured to humble myself before the Lord, and to renew my covenant engagements to be his : this I found myself heartily willing to do, and he made it a profitable time to me. O that I may, if spared, be more faithful to my gracious God this ensuing year ! Since its commencement I have experienced his goodness in many ways. Mercies and trials have been blended in an uncommon way.

March 5. Still I am kept looking for a deliverance from spiritual foes, and also from temporal difficulties, that I have not yet experienced. My soul pants after a full enjoyment of my God ; all things, persons, and places seem empty. O that he would quickly come ! The attraction from above is powerful, though more in desire than in possession ; yet the little I do enjoy creates such a fervour in my soul for more as admits of little or no delay ; such a thirst as nothing but God himself can satisfy. In the midst of trials and temptations, both outward and inward, he keeps me strongly desiring, and feebly attempting, to embrace every opportunity that offers for glorifying him in every possible way. And in this he is not a barren wilderness to me, but comforts and strengthens my heart. Often, in tender mercy, he condescends to let me see he accepts of my desires to serve him ; yet my heart is pained I do so little for him, that I love him so little, and am so little conformed to him. I have long esteemed his will very precious, and in some measure delighted in it ; yet, alas, how often does my nature in some things spurn at it. Lord, this is my misery, my hell. O destroy all rebellion in it, with a sweet omnipotence : this, O my God, thy mighty arm alone can effect.

— 18. I hardly know what to make of my present situation. My views of spiritual objects seem clear, my faith pretty strong, and my desires after entire devotion ardent : yet I feel, to my own apprehension, languid and dull ; have little sensible comfort ; not so much power to abide in secret prayer, and many wanderings, both in secret and family prayer. I feel in danger of

take care never to *sacrifice to our own net*. However prudent our plans may be formed, and however successfully they may be executed, as all events depend on God, we should pray to him with submission and confidence. Since providence is the management of God, we should neither be proud in prosperity nor distrustful in adversity." Lady Maxwell appears to have had these important truths engraven on her heart by the finger of God ; and the support which she thus secured to herself during seasons of severe trial is strikingly exemplified in very many of the following extracts.

repining and growing impatient, because my God delays his coming in that full and permanent manner he has promised. But in spite of all these discouragements as to myself, the Lord is enlarging my sphere of usefulness; increasing greatly my opportunities; enabling me with desire to embrace them; and sometimes not only suspends my spiritual distress when acting for him, but also silences my complaints, and gives me freedom and power to speak for him. Perhaps he may see it needful to keep me low as to spiritual enjoyment, lest an abundance of both should puff me up. O my God, keep me from spiritual pride, that dreadful evil;—but would not more of thy grace humble me? The more I have of thee the more I should loathe myself; the more I should see of my own nothingness. O, come then, gracious God, overpower me with thy love! swallow up my soul in thee: nothing less will satisfy.

April 12. Still He who *cannot err*, sees meet to suspend the accomplishment of precious promises, and to exercise me with many outward trials, and inward pressures and conflicts. Surely he does all things well. What I know not now I shall know hereafter. The language of Providence in some dispensations I cannot understand; but must believe what *is* is best, as it must be the express or permissive will of God. Yet I find, however it is with me, as it respects either joy or sorrow, prosperity or adversity, I am enabled, in a small degree, to pursue invariably the glory of God. I think this is the habitual bent of my soul: though, alas, I come far short, and find much in me to oppose the will of God. Yet I am struggling for deliverance, for full conformity to it.

May 17. For these last three weeks I have endured a fight of afflictions, from almost every quarter. The Lord has showed his power in strengthening me to bear them, by enabling me in some measure to cleave to him; and, in spite of *all* opposition, to believe he would perfect what concerned me; that not one word should fail of all the things of which he had spoken. The Lord I know can save me in a storm, but constant trials are not pleasant to flesh and blood. At times, when seemingly pressed out of measure, I have felt a degree of impatience, unbelief, and many other evil tempers, which have been cause of sorrow to me; at other times, I have sensibly felt a present power imparted from on high, whereby I have been made as if impregnable. My enemies might do their worst, but could not overcome. *This* was indeed comfortable, especially as it was attended with a sweet persuasion of victory; that, if I would stand still, I should see the salvation of God. Within these three weeks, I have had twice an opportunity of sitting down at the Lord's table; neither of the times was attended with remarkable comfort; but a cleaving to God, by strong faith, in the midst of many trials. As it respects some of these trials, he has, while in prayer and

laying my distress before him, clearly pointed out my way, and succeeded me in it; others he leaves me yet to grapple with, but I am not comfortless; for at all times I see him by faith as my God in Christ, though not with the same degree of sensible comfort.

June 3. Since the 17th of last month it has been a time of variegated trials. *God is love*, and giveth no unnecessary pain. Surely then He who *cannot err* sees it needful I should be thus severely tried. So perverse is human nature, even after sovereign grace has in some measure rectified it, that without frequent painful visitations from the lenient hand of the Father of our spirits, we should often go astray. In spite of all I suffer, I feel, when in any degree free from the strong influence of powerful temptations, a secret persuasion, that I shall not only overcome at last, but enjoy even *here below* a great rest from sin and self; that the Lord will bring me into a wealthy place, and make me glad according to the days wherein I have seen evil. Hasten, Lord, the happy time. For some days I have had a great struggle; have been obliged to fight against principalities, and powers, and the rulers of darkness; but, endeavouring to trust in the faithfulness and mercy of my God, in the face of the army of the aliens, I felt mightily strengthened from on high; and was enabled through grace to put them to flight. In every combat, I find my only safety lies in cleaving to God, in believing resolutely and steadily in the Lord Jesus, in opposition to all I either feel or fear.

— 21. Since the 10th of last month the furnace of temptation and trial has been hotter; yet, in the midst of it, I think my soul has been panting after God, breathing intensely after all the life divine; though tempted at times to think I was growing indifferent. When attacked from every quarter by my foes, I have at seasons sensibly felt a power from on high resting upon me, whereby I was enabled to endure temptation with silence of spirit; but at other times, when they have pressed very hard, I have been in danger of giving way to hard thoughts of God; instantly I was made sensible of my danger, and obtained power to stifle them in the birth. I have often felt the Lord peculiarly gracious to my own soul when attempting to do good to others; and, sometimes, upon the bare mention of the name of Jesus by another, he has so sweetly manifested his presence by faith as is much better felt than expressed. He greatly encourages me to act for him, even in the midst of trials, by the present reward he bestows, and he still increases my opportunities for it, with power and inclination to use them. I have of late felt strongly tempted to doubt of my interest in Jesus, but endeavoured through grace to repel it: then he drew nigh, and gave me repeated proofs of his dying love to my soul, and thereby, for the time, strengthened my faith; I was enabled to resist Satan, and he fled from me. When the force of the trial abated, and the

clouds were scattered, in God's light I saw light, and was assured I did believe in Jesus. O that these trials, though in the meantime grievous, may prove the means of rooting and grounding me in the love of God and filling me with all his fulness.

July 18. The Lord is still continuing his goodness to my soul; he has for these two weeks given me a greater degree of communion with him and nearness to him, more power and sweetness in secret prayer, and at times a remarkable enjoyment of his presence. Especially last Lord's day, in the afternoon, when in his house of prayer, I felt surrounded with his goodness: heaven seemed let down into my soul. But I was soon stripped of all, and left to fight every inch of ground with my enemies. All I could do was to fly by simple faith to Christ, and entreat he would not permit my foes to deprive me of what he had bestowed. I think my prayer was heard, for when the battle was over, I felt he had kept what I had committed to him, and I hope I was no loser. Surely there is one lesson the Lord means to teach me by these repeated conflicts and variable frames, viz., that *he changes not*; that in every state I should be persuaded of it, and invariably trust him. Lord, enable me constantly to do this.

— 24. I have cause to say, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless his holy name." He has indeed been gracious to me; O that I could make suitable returns! Since Tuesday, last week, the Lord has made much of his goodness to pass before me. He has enabled me, by faith, to retain that degree of additional fellowship and communion with himself which he gave me two weeks ago; but it has been by fighting every inch of ground with my spiritual foes. Satan has tried every artifice to rob me of it;—he has had recourse to pleasure and pain, to smiles and frowns; but, through the tender mercy of my God, all his stratagems have failed. My mind is still stayed upon God, trusting upon him. He has deeply convinced me that there is no way to retain any blessing but by simple faith, cleaving close to Christ; and flying from evil reasoning as from the face of a serpent. Within these two weeks I have indeed proved the truth of this. I have been tried various ways, and in all found nothing would avail me but this method; but this has succeeded in the midst of fiery darts, wanderings, dryness in duties, fears of losing what I had attained, and deep piercing convictions of unfaithfulness and unworthiness. Last Lord's day I had an opportunity of renewing my engagements to be his for ever, by sitting down at his table, and he made it indeed a time of refreshing from his presence. I enjoyed sweet communion with God; salvation was for walls and bulwarks; my mind was truly stayed upon my God; and I was enabled to endure as seeing Him who is invisible. My meditations of him were sweet, faith shone with a meridian brightness all the day. I cannot express what I enjoyed; I was encompassed with his favour as with a

shield. Yet in the midst of all this, Satan had well nigh deprived me of it; but I fled to Jesus for help, and he succoured me: and this day the Lord made my peace flow as a river, and gave me such a degree of fellowship with himself as I cannot express. "O for a heart to praise my God." He made me very joyful in his house of prayer, while I heard a very profitable and practical discourse by Mr. Erskine, from Joshua xxiv, 15, "But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." I found *this* was the resolution of *my heart* and the language of *my practice*; though conscious of continual shortcomings, and many evils. From the moment I sat down in the church, some time before the service began, I enjoyed sweet and strong communion with my God. His life and love flowed into my soul. I was made to ride upon my high places; and was fed with the heritage of Jacob. Afterward, fearing my enemies, who are always nigh on such occasions, I cried to the Lord to confirm my soul, and keep me from sin and Satan; and he graciously heard and answered me. While I conversed with others he made my mountain to stand strong, and gave me clear views of what he had done for me. O my God, what cause have I to say thou art a faithful God, and thy tender mercies are over all thy works! Bless the Lord, O my soul.

— 26. The Lord this day heaped his favours upon me. Being called from home in the way of duty, he not only disappointed my fears, but greatly exceeded my expectations. How great is his goodness. While on the road, heaven seemed let into my soul. I truly experienced, all the day, the accomplishment of the gracious promise made by our blessed Lord, John xiv, 23. Whether silent or speaking, whether in secret prayer or reading, whether meditating or employed in ejaculatory prayer, it was indeed one of the days of the Son of man. My enjoyment of God did not consist so much in *rapturous* feeling, or *ecstatic joy*, as in *solid, delightful, deep communion* with God the Father, and God the Son, through the eternal Spirit. This diffused through my soul such a *heavenly serenity*, such a *divine sweetness* and *unutterable peace*, as mocks all expression—language fails. The divine origin of all this, I think, was proved by its effects; which were—not confidence in the flesh, nor self-exalting, or approving thoughts; no—but a consciousness of unworthiness, of unfaithfulness, and weakness; yet joined with a sweet confidence in God; hanging upon him by constant prayer and faith, with filial fear of offending him, and a continued self-examination, and renewing the sense of his presence. O my God, stablish and strengthen my soul, and keep me in the hollow of thine hand, for I am weak as helpless infancy. On returning home, I felt indisposed, but the Lord continued his goodness. O heavenly Father, succeed the feeble attempts made to act for thee by helping others.

August 5. This day, also, I have to record the loving kindness of the Lord. From morning till night my time was spent for God, in acting for the temporal and spiritual benefit of my fellow creatures. The Lord made my mountain to stand strong; my fellowship was with the Father and the Son. Though my usual time in secret was much abridged, my God did not suffer me to lose by it; but enabled me to enjoy delightful intercourse with himself, in sitting down and rising up, going out and coming in. "O to grace how great a debtor!" I feel much led to be instant in prayer that the Lord may confirm my soul, and not let any enemy rob me of what he has given me. I trust it is the beginning of good things: and that *now* the Lord hath begun to accomplish his promises, he will not leave off till he hath done all for me of which he has spoken. Surely not one word of his shall fail: He is a faithful God. I do not think I am yet possessed of *all* I think included in the blessing of entire devotion: I believe I enjoy a measure of it. I am enabled to believe in a fuller and larger measure than usual, and have a more constant and deeper communion with God and with his dear Son than formerly. My heart more than ever cleaves to the means of grace, and I am more blessed in them. I have a keener sensibility of evil; stronger desires after all the fulness of God; and a greater *resting* in him. From these evidences and fruits, I conclude the Lord has deepened his work in my soul. O my God, give the clear and abiding witness of thy Spirit, to testify unto me *what* thou hast done for me. Give it for sanctification as thou hast given it for justification.

— 17. Still the Lord continues to bless me, still he enables me to cleave to him by faith, and to believe for the blessing lately received, even when much of the *sensible comfort* of it is withdrawn. This I think one proof of true faith. When we only believe in consequence of great joy, and lose that belief as soon as the joy is gone, we make *comfort* the foundation of our faith, and not the *testimony* of the Holy Ghost. Still, however, I must believe that true faith is inseparably connected, less or more, with love, joy, and peace. The Lord still gives me to feel more comfort in morning devotion; and this forenoon, I enjoyed the privilege and found the benefit of Christian conversation and social prayer. Just after, I spent a long time in assisting those who have set out in the good way of God, and proved it of use to myself. How closely connected is our duty and interest; and herein appears the wisdom and goodness of the Most High.

Sept. 3. I have not that degree of comfort which I have enjoyed, neither that clearness respecting the increase of grace the Lord gave me of late; yet I dare not give it up. I fly from doubting of what the Lord has done. He has given me so many promises that I must believe; but it is a time of temptation. Lord, stand by me, and let me not give up the beginning of my

confidence, as it regards the last blessing. I have been for some days unhappy, from a fear of losing through unbelief what the Lord has done for me.

— 17. For several days my soul has, I think, been pursuing after more near and intimate communion with God; it there be any difference, it seems rather increased. Wherever I am, this is the habitual desire of my heart; in comparison of it all other things are as nothing. I am kept crying constantly to the Lord for it, under discouragements, outward and inward; I find the necessity of asserting my liberties in the face of Satan and sin. I still can believe for the blessing lately received, in a small degree; but more from simple faith than enjoyment. Jesus so sweetly manifests his presence by faith as I cannot easily express: he is truly precious to my soul, as the chiefest of ten thousand. I am uncomfortable if I do not every moment find communion with the Father and the Son. I do in a degree experience this, but then it appears in my own eyes so far short of what I expect, and also think included in the blessing of entire devotion, that I am sometimes in danger of despising the day of small things: but again, when I look to the amazing promises the Lord has not only made in general in his word, but frequently applied with power to my mind, I am greatly encouraged to press on; to pray always and not faint; because, "he is faithful who has promised, who also will do it." I have it to record, to the glory of my God, that when I attempt to do any thing for him, either by speaking for him in my own house, or visiting the sick abroad, he greatly assists me, by increasing my communion with himself, and giving me to feel sweet liberty in my own soul. But still I feel a degree of darkness and uncertainty on my mind, with regard to the Lord's will concerning me in some particulars; though for some time I have had power to stay my soul upon him, and to pray that he would accomplish "all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power." I have felt less sweetness in secret prayer than for some time.

— 21. My communion with my God has been almost uninterrupted for several days:

"Not a cloud did arise, to darken the skies,
Or hide for a moment my Lord from my eyes."

I have not had much *joy*, but sweet peace. The Lord Jesus has been unspeakably precious. His name has indeed been as ointment poured forth, and my soul has cleaved to him: he is truly the desire of my eyes, and the delight of my heart, the source of all my consolation. But I know little of him, in comparison of what I might, and hope to do. Many opportunities are daily offering whereby to glorify God and profit my fellow-creatures, which the Lord still inclines and enables me to em-

brace. I am deeply conscious that of myself I can do nothing ; but I am fully persuaded that the weakest instrument in the hand of Omnipotence is equal to the most arduous task : and he sometimes condescends to show me that my words, though spoken in weakness, do not always fall to the ground. Independently of this consideration, I feel constantly desirous to fill up my time with and for God : to take every opportunity that he gives me for glorifying him in every possible way. This often makes me singular, and reduces me to the disagreeable necessity of walking and acting not as others do, which gives offence. People often assign a cause for my conduct, that only exists in their own imagination, viz., that I think myself better than others. This gives me pain. It is certainly contrary to my natural temper to say, "Stand by, I am holier than thou." But I cannot help it, it is a cross, and I must either bear it, or walk contrary to the light imparted from on high.

October 3. In the course of these last eight days, I have been variously tempted and tried ; but have also experienced the Lord's goodness in many ways. The force of trials and temptations has, in some measure, impaired my joy ; but I find the bitterest ingredient is a fear, that I have been unfaithful : this is grievous to my soul. I ask not freedom from sufferings, but O, I ardently desire to be faithful to God in *all things*, and in all situations to glorify him. Lord, thy sovereign grace can effect this great work in the heart of a worm. O, for the honour of thy name, do this thing, and I will praise thee. At times, I have enjoyed communion with God, and Jesus has been precious to me, but still I am defective in watching, in wrestling, in prayer, in humility, and in every grace. Yet I find it will not do to sit down and despond : I must be up and be doing. The Lord is still teaching me the important lesson of living by faith, and it generally brings fresh strength and comfort into my soul. He shows me that I *stand* by *faith*, that this faith is his *gift*, and that I receive it by looking unto Jesus ; by believing in him ; and by cleaving to him in spite of all I either *fear* or *feel*. I also find it of great use to endeavour,—in opposition to unbelief, evil reasoning, and the suggestions of Satan,—to believe *resolutely* the promises of God ; that he is faithful who hath promised, who also will do it. His promise, I find, must be the object of my faith ; this at all times, however improbable to reason the accomplishment may appear : and when I am thus attempting to fight the good fight of faith, he generally sets to his seal of approbation by pouring consolation and strength into my soul.

— 12. I have been taught several important lessons. I have been shown the evil and great impropriety of *lightness of spirit*, in a religious character ; and made earnestly desirous to get entirely freed from it. I have seen the beauty of being at

all times religiously recollected, and sweetly solemn; and have also greatly desired to be so: I have likewise been deeply convinced of the great sin of *speaking evil* of any one, or even mentioning, without necessity, what may be true of absent persons, if it is bad; and have longed to be more than ever clear herein.* I have also seen it is a great device of Satan to hinder me from dwelling upon the great things which God has already done for me, under the plausible pretext of pressing on for what I have not yet attained; by so doing he prevents a proper enjoyment of what I have already, and of consequence diminisheth my gratitude to the great Author of all.

— 27. Was much alone to-day, yet enjoyed little comfort. I was long employed in secret prayer and reading the Scriptures; studying the promises, and praying over them; looking and longing for their accomplishment; pained with my distance from God, and yet unable to get nearer. Yet I endeavoured to stir up others to trust in him, and could reason well upon the immutability of his promises; but felt little benefit from it myself. I feel, more than ever, called to trust in the promises, but am uncommonly tempted with unbelief. O what a *hydra* is this foe! Lord, subdue it. I begin to think one fruitful source of distress to me is, a spirit too anxious, too vehement, and too restless. I fear, I attach an improper importance to my efforts in attempting to go in the good way; at least, I am beginning to suspect there is something of this in the case. I restlessly use duty, and mean after mean, as if the Lord could or would do nothing without me. In one sense this is true; but I fear I *trust too much* to the use of means, to my own feeble efforts, and do not simply *use them*, and yet look above them to their great Author. One reason for my thinking thus is, I am *perfectly uneasy* if kept from any; and if at any time laid aside through affliction, and especially if confined to bed, I am ready to conclude all that time is lost; as if I were not as *safe* when *suffering* the will of God as when *doing* it: or as if the Lord cannot operate on my soul unless I am found in some active duty. Lord, if this is really my folly, convince me clearly of it, and cure me thoroughly. O may I ever remember that the greatest work of all is to believe.

— 31. Found myself profited to-day by taking up my cross. Was also benefited by social prayer, and Christian converse upon the deep things of God; and by endeavouring to help

* “Slander,” says Saurin, “is a vice impure in its source, dangerous in its effects, general in its influence, irreparable in its consequence; a vice that strikes at once three mortal blows; it wounds him who commits it, him against whom it is committed, and him who sees it committed. It is tolerated in society only because every one has an invincible inclination to commit it.” But this inclination, though invincible, when opposed by merely human efforts, yields to the power of omnipotent grace.—*Saurin’s Sermon*, vol. iv, p. 134.

a Christian friend out of the mire of temptation, otherwise stronger in the faith than myself. O the fascinating power of temptation! Lord, what are the strongest Christians without thy continual aid! Perhaps I stood more in need of the exhortation than my friend; but I find it is much more profitable, when I meet with Christians who have many complaints, to encourage them to trust in God, to exercise faith and love, than to join in complaining, by telling them all my particular grievances. I may have much to bewail, as well as they; but I have often found, in encouraging others, my own soul blessed, my faith strengthened, and love increased. My soul has been restlessly pursuing after God; I have felt more power to abide in prayer, to trust that the Lord will finish his work in my soul, and accomplish all the good pleasure of his will in me, and the work of faith with power, even though I should, in the course of Providence, be deprived of those helps which I have found peculiarly useful. In the view of this to-day, I found I could repose my soul on God. Surely no creature, or thing, can be of any use to me, but what he makes them; of consequence, if he remove one, he can raise up another. Lord, increase my trust in thee.

Nov. 12. Since my last date I have been sorely afflicted in body. O that it may bring forth the peaceable fruits of righteousness. During the first day or two of my illness my mind was very languid; so that I could hardly put up one petition. The Lord in mercy kept off the enemy; I was more free than usual from inward conflicts; but I felt much confusion of thought, owing in part, no doubt, to the violence of the disorder. I felt much, but feared more; and, in the event of death, almost dreaded appearing before the tribunal of God; while so stupid and confused, I forgot that his mighty power could in a moment make me fit for it, if it had then been his will to have called me home. What a multitude of thoughts, unreasonable and false ones, does unbelief produce. How amazingly, also, is the whole frame unhinged, when the nerves and spirits are affected! Were it the will of my God, how desirable would be an exemption from these afflictions, which deeply affect either. "A man may sustain his infirmities, but a wounded spirit who can bear?" This completely unmans one; all our natural fortitude is lost; we then fear where no fear is, and dread a thousand evils that never befall us. In short, we turn adepts in self-tormenting: with the poet, I would say,

"All deaths, all tortures, in one pang combined,
Are gentle, to the torments of the mind."

When raised from a bed of sickness I felt piercing convictions of unfaithfulness, unfruitfulness, unworthiness; and was ashamed to look up to God, I had made so little progress in his ways, and yet for years had been surrounded with every spiritual

advantage; I felt so little of the mind of Christ. At the same time, my views of Jesus as my God and Saviour were clear; and I was so encompassed about with precious promises that I was kept from sinking.

— 22. I felt once or twice this morning strongly *tempted* to *anger* and *pride*. The Lord quickly showed the danger, and I think gave me victory. Yet Satan nearly disturbed my comfort just after, by suggesting that I had given way in some degree; and, therefore, “I had better give up, at least, part of the happiness I enjoyed, for I had no title to it.” I saw the cloven foot, was aware of his intention, and cried to the Lord to rebuke him. I fled also afresh to the blood of Jesus, lest I might have contracted any guilt; and, immediately after, my God was indeed gracious—increased my faith and love; and wonderfully opened my mouth, to declare his goodness to my soul, before those who feared and loved him. He also enabled me to keep up the spirit of religious conversation before others: and encouraged me by some persons declaring that they had received benefit from my former conversation and attempts to help them. How condescending was this to my weakness, but I fear I felt too much *complacency* in it; for, though I went with enlarged expectations in the evening to his house of prayer, all was unprofitable, and I was much disappointed. Lord, make me dead to all approbation but *thine*, and surely that will not make me high-minded.

Dec. 31. The last day of this year. O that I were able to look back with satisfaction on a year spent wholly for, and to God. I can, I think, truly say, this has been my constant aim through the whole of it; but, alas, I have come far short, and have reason to say, “It is of the Lord’s mercies that I am not consumed.” O my God, as thou hast brought me to the end of another year, accept of my grateful thanks for all the goodness thou hast made to pass before me in the course of it. O sanctify all the dispensations of thy providence toward me: forgive all my sins in heart or life, known or unknown. O permit and enable me, in thy strength, to devote myself afresh unto thee, with all I have and am, or ever shall have.

“Take my body, spirit, soul,
Only thou possess the whole.”

Through thy grace may I, while I live, only live to thee; and when I die, may I die to thee.

CHAPTER X.—1775.

Diary continued.

January 13. This day, though much employed with God, I was much grieved with hardness of heart and unbelief. My heart would still pant after full communion with God; this only can satisfy my soul, but, O my faith is greatly tried by the accomplishment of the promises being so long delayed. I see, both from the word of God and the experience of Christians in all ages, that this has generally been the case: they have been tried to the uttermost, before the Lord performed what he had spoken; especially when he was about to do any great work, either in them or by them. Yet I am very impatient. Hope deferred maketh my heart sick. The trial of my faith is both precious and profitable; but it is also very painful: surely the blessing will be sweet, and very permanent, when it does come. Through the whole of this day I was tempted to relinquish hope, and was ready to say, I shall never see the fulfilment of the promises. This was my infirmity, and though the Lord suffered me to cry long, yet at last he applied to my mind a comfortable passage to quiet my fears, and to strengthen my faith: "And a man shall be as a hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest: as rivers of water in a dry place; as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." Delightful words; I have often experienced them true. Jesus hath been very precious to me, and clear of the eye of faith. Temporal things were also distressing to me. I had cried much to the Lord, and had obtained no answer, which greatly discouraged me; my hands were hanging down, and my knees waxing feeble: but concerning this, also, his word brought relief: "I have been with thee in six troubles, and will not leave thee in the seventh." How great is his goodness! O Lord, when wilt thou enable me to make some small return, by loving thee with all my heart? O why dost thou keep a poor soul so long at such a painful distance from thee?—a soul that so ardently desires, and so constantly pants, for uninterrupted communion with thee; for power to walk with thee like Enoch of old. O have compassion on me, and bring me near.

— 22. (Sunday.) I have endured much anguish of spirit for some time. My heart, has been as it were, wrung within me through the cruel power of unbelief; I mean, as it relates to the accomplishment of precious promises. With respect to my interest in Jesus, I bless the Father of mercies there is no uncertainty on this subject: all is clear, and Jesus is in my heart the constant hope of glory. But this cannot suffice; yet it ought, I think, to afford me more comfort than I seem willing to receive. Like the children of Israel, the bondage of corruption and unbe-

lief is so galling, I cannot, through anguish of spirit, listen to any thing comfortable : Satan, also, is permitted to sift me as wheat ; hitherto the Lord has prayed for me, else I had utterly failed. Yet, I have cause to sing of mercy, as well as of judgment. Notwithstanding my variegated distresses, the Lord hath brought many gracious promises, with peculiar force and sweetness, to my remembrance, both as it concerns myself and some of my near relations. O how thankful ought I to be : but, alas ! my distress is so great, I fail much in this delightful duty. My heart feels more and more emptied of things below, they grow very insipid. This spiritual circumcision is truly painful, but I believe very necessary for the soul that would be entirely devoted to God. I wait for God—my soul doth wait ; yea, in the midst of my distress it pants for him. I cannot live at this distance. I would fain hope rest and deliverance are at hand ; matters appear to be approaching to a crisis. O that it might be *now* !—speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth.

February 1. Enjoyed precious means of grace to-day, which were in a measure profitable. My heart panted after more of God, yet I met with a trial which felt severe. I was tempted to evil tempers ; but enjoyed power to look to Jesus, and was delivered : they obtained no place in my heart. I never so clearly perceived the difference between *temptation* and *sin*. It made Jesus precious to my soul as a strong deliverer.

— 4. Found power to abide in prayer this morning. I felt several times as if inwardly warned to expect that something painful was about to happen ; but I did not enough regard the secret intimation ; and, therefore, did not arm myself as I ought to have done by prayer. When the trial came, I was hurried and unprepared, and did not, as usual, cry for the Lord's presence and direction, and I smarted for my folly and unfaithfulness. After it was begun, a horror seemed to seize my spirit. I then feared my foes, and looked to the Lord for help. He was gracious, and enabled me to cleave to himself, as a girdle to the loins of a man. By faith, I saw Him that is invisible, and my soul felt sweetly and sensibly anchored within the veil. O how good is it to have Jesus for our friend in the time of trial, and to find him near for our assistance !

— 21. For some mornings, as soon as I awoke, my thoughts have sprung up to the beloved of my soul ; and he has felt very nigh, and my hold of him strong. Lately, I find most power to enjoy communion with God in meditation, in conversing with others on spiritual subjects, in reading, and in ejaculatory prayer. Was enabled to-day, in some measure, to be faithful to God, though at the risk of losing the favour of man. Lord, make me more faithful. Have lately enjoyed more power to feed upon the promises ; they are very sweet, and my faith in them rather increases.

— 24. A day of great indisposition of body, and much faintness in my spirit. None living have a greater call than I have to improve the moments of health allowed me ; for when sick I seem quite laid aside. O my God, give me *power*, and *grace* to *use* that power, to live much in the time of health. But I would fain live alike to thee in sickness, as when in health. I find it more easy to *do* than to *suffer* the will of God. In all things let thy will take place in me. O subdue all things in me to thyself. Let me delight myself in thee, and to thee commit all my ways.

— 25. The Lord has in mercy raised me up again. O that I may be more than ever devoted to my God. A degree of languor through the day overspread my soul, yet I felt more of the spirit of devotion, more desire to call on God, and a greater relish for spiritual things. In this I differ from many others, for most people speak as if they were most serious when most afflicted ; but, on the contrary, I feel most alive to God when I enjoy the largest measure of health.

March 7. For some time, I have enjoyed a more intimate intercourse and deeper acquaintance with Jesus. Attempting frequently to make a full surrender of my heart to him, has proved a most delightful exercise ; and he has, on every such attempt, felt just at hand, and willing to receive it. This has been attended with a present reward. But while engaged in this delightful exercise to-day, Satan tempted me in an uncommon manner ; yet that is no reason why I should desist. Outward trials are rather fewer than usual, and those which remain I am enabled to give up to God.

— 17. I feel much discouraged with the remains of a body of sin and death, with the sins of my family, and of the place where I live. On all these accounts, my hands are hanging down. Indeed most things seem to wear a gloomy aspect. As a nation, there are wars and rumours of wars :—as a church, we are torn by factions, parties, prejudices, and diversities of opinions among those of us who are in any degree serious ;—others, and, alas ! the greater part, care for none of these things, but are at ease in Zion ;—as individuals, much carnality, worldly mindedness, and insensibility prevail. Will not the Lord be avenged on such a nation as this ? What reason have we to fear that the gospel will be taken from us, and sent to a people more deserving of it ? O Lord, in the midst of deserved wrath remember mercy !

— 19. (Sunday.) This morning the Lord turned my captivity. I had no remarkable joy, but a heavenly sweetness diffused through my mind, and all uneasy solicitude was fled. Yet it seemed a different enjoyment from what I experienced last week. Jesus *then* appeared clear to the eye of my faith, as much so as any material object could do to the eye of the body ; but *now* I have no such particular view. It was a sweet peace in general,

with an increase of spiritual life. This continued all the afternoon, especially till I went to the table of the Lord. Satan often attempted to disturb it, but was not permitted; though he had laid a snare for me of which I was not aware. I fear I did not altogether escape, but I cried to the Lord, and appealed to him that what I had done was in the integrity of my heart, and he had mercy on me. There is danger on every hand. I had many petitions to offer up to the Lord at his table, and I do hope they were registered above, and will be answered. Immediately after communicating, I felt a decrease of spiritual enjoyment, and my indisposition of body returned: but still I enjoyed, through the whole of the day, a measure of what I received in the morning.

April 7. Since my last I have experienced many trials and many changes. Sometimes flushed with hopes of speedy deliverance, and then I went on comfortably: at other times I have sunk down under discouragements, fearing I should have to continue long struggling with my enemies; this never fails to weaken my hands. My health has been very precarious, and this also has tended to depress me. All must enter the kingdom through much tribulation: it is a piece of necessary discipline; it helps to humble, and to keep humble, our naturally proud hearts. Even Jesus learned obedience by the things which he suffered: shall I then complain? Lord, I do not, neither dare I ask any exemption from suffering; but I may entreat for power to be able to glorify thee in the fires. O hear me in *this* thing, then shall I patiently submit to all thy righteous will. Yet, in the midst of trials, I am not left comfortless; the Lord still blesses me with refreshing seasons; but nothing short of continual communion with God, and all that freedom from sin which Christ has purchased, can satisfy me. All this the Lord has promised, and I must and will believe his word.

— 14. The Lord has given me a little reviving in my bondage. His mercy endureth for ever: he will not always chide; neither will he keep his anger for ever; he knows the spirit would fail before him, and the soul which he hath made. He is my chief good, the constant enjoyment which I desire:—yet, amazing, how slow my progress in the pursuit of this eternal, supreme Good. Lord, do I not love thee above all?

“Is there a thing beneath the sun,
That strives with thee my heart to share?
Ah, tear it thence, and reign alone,
The Lord of every motion there;
Then shall my heart from earth be free,
When it has found repose in thee.”

My God has condescended wonderfully to comfort my distressed heart; to strengthen my faith in the promises, and my trust in his mercy and love; both are increased, O may they continue.

By the cruel force of my spiritual adversaries; by the variety and continuance of outward trials; and by united and severe inward conflicts, I was indeed brought very low, and was driven to extremity. I listened too much to the enemy; looked too much at the temptations; and gave too much heed to carnal reasoning: all of which only tended to increase my distress. But my God had mercy on me; rebuked the enemy, and also gently reproved me. O Lord, I acknowledge the justice of the charge, and grieve for it. Do thou give me patience; for *that*, as well as every good gift, cometh from thee. O bestow it largely upon me; that, in the midst of sufferings, I may glorify thee. Having tasted that thou art good, how can I live at this painful distance?—my heart so cold, my faith so weak, my love so languid. O teach me, thou divine Teacher, the blessed art of every moment panting after full communion with thee; and yet without impatience, never murmuring at thy stay, nor wishing my sufferings less.

— 16. (Sunday) Had many opportunities to wait on the Lord in public, and did it with composure until the evening; but then the enemy endeavoured to distress me. I am, I believe, much too prone to judge of my state by my frames and feelings; and thereby, at times, draw false conclusions. I believe, would we ascertain the reality of our conversion, no inward feelings should in general be exclusively depended on: to these should be added decisive evidence in our outward conduct. Unquestionably the witness of God's Spirit with our spirit, as mentioned in Rom. viii, 16, is more satisfactory than any other single evidence; *this I have*:—but, to prevent mistake in such a momentous affair, it is also necessary that we have the outward fruit of the self-same Spirit. These together, if properly attended to, will ascertain clearly what state we are in. Lord, thou hast my heart, take it more fully: let it only beat for thee. O unfold more of thy saving beauty to my mind:—break with full blaze on my enraptured soul.

— 21. My God has remarkably appeared in my behalf, as it respects my charity school, about which I was in danger of being plunged into difficulties. From continued bad health, the teacher had given it up. I had no prospect of another, far less of one like-minded; and from this and other circumstances, I almost feared that I should be obliged to relinquish my benevolent plan. After repeated applications to the Lord, by myself and others, he enabled me to believe that the school would be provided for, and that he would be my guide, director, counsellor, my God, and my all. I was satisfied, though I had no particular person in view, only I strongly hoped that he would incline the heart of the present teacher to remain: accordingly, in a few days, he came and told me he could not think of going away, and had therefore refused a place of more profit and less

fatigue. Surely this was of God. The good man said there seemed to be something very remarkable in it, for after he had fully determined to leave the school, his mind suddenly changed, and he felt as if almost obliged to relinquish his determination. The Lord also appears to be opening a way for my assistance, with regard to the expense attending the school, which has greatly increased ; and, in present circumstances, would be more than I could well afford. Surely he doth all things well. O that I could trust him more.

May 5. Since my last date, the Lord has dealt bountifully with me. My time has been unusually devoted to the temporal, but much more to the spiritual benefit of others, and it has indeed been a precious season to myself in various ways. O to be enabled to improve to the uttermost all my mercies ! My God, teach me this divine art, and let me not, as I have hitherto too often done, prove unfruitful. I feel at a loss where to begin to enumerate the mercies of the Lord, manifested to me within these few days. When conversing with others upon the things of God, especially with those who were just setting out in religious life, my soul has been greatly blessed, my communion with God increased, my views of eternal things made very clear by faith, and particularly of God the Father and God the Son. O how sweetly has my Jesus manifested his presence, and fixed my soul steadily on himself. O that I may never forget it, and that these delightful visits from on high may prove more than ever of a transforming nature. My God has given me fresh instances of his faithfulness, which have evidently borne the stamp divine. To him be all the glory. The Lord hath also refreshed me much, strengthened my hands, and comforted my heart, by giving me to know that what I have said and written to others has not been in vain. Amazing goodness ! How wonderful are his ways ! How great his condescension ! Lord, what shall I render unto thee ! He can and does choose what instruments he pleases :—even rams' horns, if the Almighty fiat go forth, shall prove sufficient to demolish the walls of Jericho. O that he would abundantly increase my usefulness in this respect, for he hath set my heart upon glorifying him in *this way* ! I have enjoyed more power and sweetness in secret and family prayer than usual, and have been enabled in a degree to live by faith. The Lord has also inclined others to assist me in my labours of love.

“ O for a heart to praise my God.”

These are but a few of his mercies to a poor worm : but O how defective have been my returns :—how many have been my failings :—how continued my shortcomings :—how numerous my offences ! O my God, be not strict to mark mine iniquities !

— 19. Conversing with a very particular friend on the

work of grace in the soul, and of the cause of God in general, Jesus drew very nigh, and diffused a heavenly serenity over all my soul. How inexplicably does faith realize spiritual objects. The bodily eye does not perceive with greater clearness a material object, placed full in its view, than the *visive* faculty of the mind, enlightened from on high, does unseen things. Surely, my Lord, it is heaven when thou art nigh ; and what is hell, but thy total absence ? O permit me every moment to feel the powerful attraction of thy love, and let it prove of a strongly assimilating nature. I was indeed made to sit in heavenly places this evening ; it was also a time of refreshing to my Christian friend. While I now write, the Father of mercies is watering the parched ground with fruitful showers : should I live to see to-morrow's sun shine in his brightness, I shall be able to perceive a growth in the plants and flowers that adorn my little garden : why, then, do I not perceive a similar increase in the garden of my soul, so often watered as it is with heart-reviving showers of grace. My God, show me, if there be any worm at the core, or any little foxes which hinder the growth of the tender vine of grace. If there be, with a hand graciously severe, tear them hence, though all my nature should keenly feel the stroke. The Lord has made outward things of late take such a turn as has a tendency to increase my inward peace ; to strengthen my faith in his promises ; and to increase my trust in his goodness and mercy. He has inclined the heart of a particular female friend to throw her mite with mine into the treasury of heaven : I mean, to unite with me in bearing *half* of the expense of my little charity school. We have now upward of thirty young ones, who are not only taught reading, writing, arithmetic, &c., &c., but are also trained up in the fear of God ; every method being taken to lead them to the saving knowledge of him and his Son Jesus Christ. He hath in mercy hitherto countenanced this attempt, and has of late given me greater cause than ever to believe he will bless it more and more. O my God, do thou richly recompense with thy heavenly grace the souls of thy handmaids, whose hearts thou hast inclined to devote their substance to thee ; and do thou enlarge our borders, and enable us to go on with increasing zeal in every good word and work.*

June 9. I cannot, as I would, express all the goodness the Lord has made to pass before me for some weeks. It has been a time of suffering and enjoyment. I have experienced much of my own weakness and helplessness, and also much of the power and malice of my spiritual enemies ; but my time of extremity was the Lord's opportunity, and he manifested his goodness to my soul. Especially on Sunday last, when, almost pressed out

* The friend alluded to in this extract is Lady Henrietta Hope.

of measure with outward and unexpected trials, a storm had nearly arisen within. I was greatly agitated with fear, lest I should lose what the Lord had wrought for me. I was also grieved to find the strength of my own will. I cried to the Lord, and he, in great mercy, quickly and literally answered my prayer. He restored tranquillity to my soul, and gave me that degree of sweet fellowship with himself I had before the trial. Immediately after, my heart felt so melted down with a sense of my own unworthiness, and his goodness, as I cannot express. I have, upon the whole, enjoyed rather more communion with my God for some time past than usual. When I spend time with others for his sake, he is peculiarly gracious, and sweetly manifests his presence. My perception of divine objects is very clear; my peace is made to flow as a river; while God, with full and cloudless demonstration, conveys his promised grace to my soul. O Lord, I would record these instances of thy goodness, that I may not forget any of thy benefits, and that my trust for future mercies may be strengthened; but, above all, that thy name may be glorified.

July 1. The power of temptation has been painful for some time. I have been almost ready to conclude that I was receding, instead of advancing. I felt as if stripped of all, excepting a small grain of faith. By the light of this, I discovered I was justified, but I enjoyed little of the comfort of it. I have indeed been made sensible that all I enjoy I hold of God. I found I could not possess one desire after him, his ways, or his people, unless he bestowed it. I have experienced but little fervour in prayer, and apparently small profit from the public means of grace. I am also at a loss how to account for this uncomfortable state. Is it, O my God, a punishment from thee for my unfaithfulness; or is it a sinking deeper into self-knowledge? Lord, thou knowest; cause me to know it: I dread the former; O to be delivered from it. I believe I had also given way to a degree of carnal reasoning. How many are my foes,—when shall I obtain victory? To-day, I am beginning to emerge out of this sea of temptation. O my God, set my feet upon a rock, and order my goings.

— 11. Upon the whole, a good day. Found Christ precious and near, when strengthening the hands of a distressed disciple; also, in a measure, when employed in prayer, praise, and Christian conversation. In the evening, spent much time with a female in conversing with her on the salvation of her soul. O how did I wish for the gift of convincing speech. What comfort would it have given me, could I have solidly confuted all her objections, and reached her heart with self-evident demonstration. But this power belongeth unto God; yet I know he can bless, and make effectual the weakest words. O that he may do this in the present case.

August 2. I have gone through much distress for some days. I trust the Lord is deepening his work in my soul; I hope the time is at hand when he will bring me into the wealthy place; it is indeed, and has been, through fire and water. My foes are now very bitter against me: Satan rages mightily. O that his time may be short. I am not permitted to entertain one doubt of my interest in Christ; yea, I feel my soul every moment united to him; yet so great is the power of temptation, that Satan makes even God a terror to me, and I am afraid of his judgments. I have dreaded lest the enemy should drive me away from God. He does drive me from a throne of grace, at least often attempts, and makes me feel a terror while at it. My anguish of spirit is so great, my unreasonable fears so strong, I can listen to nothing that is comfortable. I am astonished with amazement, my natural spirits are like to fail. How long, Lord, shall my enemies triumph over me? My flesh is wasted off my bones, and my spirits are drunk up! O Lord, cut short thy work. Yet, in the midst of all my distress, I feel eager to grasp at any opportunity to glorify God, by doing good to the souls or bodies of my fellow creatures. O my God, come to my help, deliver my poor soul, and I will praise thee!

— 26. Through mercy, my views of Jesus as my Beloved have been clear this last week. As I have rode or walked by the way, my meditations of him have been sweet. O how amazing, then, those unreasonable fears with which I have been so painfully harassed. Surely they must be the result of strong temptation: or art thou, O my God, in this way carrying on thy work in my soul? I do indeed feel stripped of all self-dependence, at least more than usual. I see and feel that I am nothing, yea, worse than nothing. I feel as if afraid of God, and am terrified by his judgments. This must certainly, in some measure, be owing to that contrariety to a holy God that is still to be found in me. Is it not a degree of that fear which has torment? and which keeps me from delighting in God as I might. A thousand nameless fears often surround me, and Satan for some moments will suggest unworthy thoughts of God, when yet I know he is my God. This drinks up my spirits, and prevents, at least for the time, all the warm desires of my soul after him. I then fear death, I fear pain, I fear distress of various kinds; I fear—alas, what fear I not, when thus forcibly driven from the centre of all true rest and joy! It is indeed wormwood and gall. O when will it end! Where, Lord, are the great things which thou hast promised:—that entire sanctification; that constant communion with thyself, which thy promises hold out as the privileges of thy people? Surely these promises cannot fail. Is this, Lord, the way in which I must be led to the accomplishment of them? If so, I would fain say, “Thy will be done.” But, O! it is a thorny path, a rugged road; it tries every grain

of grace which thou hast given. Yet I long to glorify God. I see emptiness written on all created good : every thing is insipid that does not lead to him.

October 25. After travelling upward of five hundred miles for the benefit of my health, the Lord has again brought me to my habitation in peace. He is a faithful God, and has given me much cause to speak good of his name. He preserved man and beast by the way ; yea, wonderfully preserved us, when exposed to imminent danger, and when others were cut off by the same danger and at the same time. How great is his goodness !—He also gave me many opportunities to attempt, in various ways, to lead sinners to the knowledge of himself ; and in this delightful, important work, he afforded me great encouragement. O my God, bless these feeble attempts, and then they shall not be in vain. My God gave me also to taste of his love, at different places of worship on the road ; in secret and social prayer, and in frequent conversation with his people. Lord, thou art good, though I am unworthy. This week past, since I came home, the Lord has increased my love to himself, my comfort and liberty in secret prayer ; and has given me to feel Christ unspeakably precious, altogether lovely. My heart has gone out much after him ; my faith has been strong in him ; and my views clear of him : at the same time, I had a pungent sense of my unworthiness, unfruitfulness, and want of gratitude. This would have greatly depressed me, if the Lord had not been so gracious ; but he drew my heart to himself, abstracted it from created objects, and made me partake of a supreme good.

— 31. This evening, under a sermon on Abraham's offering up Isaac, Jesus drew nigh, and powerfully manifested his presence by faith. Satan attempted to reason me out of *this*, by endeavouring to persuade me to impute it to a feverish imagination, but he did not prevail. What an enemy is he to the comforts of faith,—to simple believing ! When the soul gives way in any measure to his subtle arts, it is amazing how soon it darkens the mind, and obscures the brightest manifestations of divine love. Lord, ever give me that strength of faith which will bring cloudless demonstration that it comes from above, and may it at all times work by love. Felt often to-day strongly tempted to evil tempers, and am not certain that I entirely escaped unhurt. O my God, give me light to discern between *temptation* and *sin*. It is only in thy light that we can, in certain cases, distinguish the one from the other. My heart is still pained with a want of greater conformity to my Jesus. I long for his image to be wholly impressed on my soul. O how little do I know of God, or myself. How small a degree of his love do I possess ! I pine from day to day for more, but still do not attain. I long for secret prayer, yet often.

when alone, I do not feel power to wrestle for the blessing. I may say with the poet,

“ Scarce I begin my sad complaint,
When all my warmest wishes faint ;
Hardly I lift my weeping eye,
When all my kindling ardours die ;
Nor hopes nor fears my bosom move,
For still I cannot, cannot love.”

November 13. (*Monday after the town sacrament.*) I would record the loving kindness of my God to me on all the days of this solemn ordinance. On Saturday he gave me much time alone in the forenoon, with some comfort. In the afternoon he carried me to his house of prayer, and it was a time of great refreshing from his presence. The subject was a delightful one : “ How Christ communicates his love to the believing soul.” Though the manner and some of the expressions of the speaker were exceptionable, I was raised above it, and enjoyed sweet communion with God the Father, and God the Son. I had no remarkable *joy*, no rapturous ecstatic enjoyment ; but a calm and serene possession of that peace which passeth understanding ; a degree of a silent heaven of love, better felt than expressed. I saw God by faith, and had a distinct view of Jesus as the second person of the ever blessed Trinity, and enjoyed delightful union with him. From *this source alone* all my blessings, all my spiritual enjoyments flow. I have generally a peculiarly sweet consciousness of this important fact, which answers two valuable purposes ; it makes Jesus unspeakably precious to me, and tends to keep me humble—to wean me from self-righteousness, with its constant attendant, self-confidence. At seven in the evening heard a sermon in the chapel, on “ Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith.” Here also the Lord shone on his work in my soul, and my evidences were clear and satisfactory. Yet I have felt of late tempted not to write or speak of the goodness of the Lord, lest I should be in a mistake ; because I do not feel as if these manifestations brought with them a proportionate degree of holiness. O Lord, if this is from Satan, give me victory over it ; if from thee, make me certain of it ; and let me be able to act as thou wouldst have me : *thou knowest* I would not impose a thing of naught upon myself, neither would I deceive others. At night I endeavoured solemnly to renew my covenant with God, and then went to rest as if in the arms of divine love.

— 14. The Lord heard my prayer, gave me a measure of health, and enabled me to wait upon him in the ordinance of the supper. Again he allowed me to enjoy communion with himself and with his dear Son. Not much *joy*, but in a measure the accomplishment of Christ’s gracious promise, John xiv, 23.

In myself I felt very empty, but looking to Christ by faith, he showed where all fulness dwelt, and *all for me*. O the unsearchable riches of Christ!

— 15. The last day of the feast, and I know not but the greatest. Here, also, the Lord disappointed my fears, raised me up this morning in a measure of health, and again brought me to his house. We had a most excellent sermon from, “The joy of the Lord is your strength.” I not only heard with composure, but truly the Lord was with me. I felt a holy fear of sin arise in my heart, and a dread lest I should lose what I enjoyed. On coming home, my heart was warmed with deep impressions of divine love. O that they may prove permanent, and of a more transforming nature than formerly. O that I may be enabled more than ever to glorify God, and adorn his gospel.

— 29. Since Saturday last I have enjoyed a sensible increase of faith, love, joy, and peace. Jesus has so surrounded me with his presence as words fail me to express. I have been enabled to believe in him much more than usual, with a strong lively faith. I have had fuller enjoyment of him, and cleaved more steadily to him, morning, noon, and night. When I awake in the night he is with me; and in the morning, when I look up, I am still with him. I cannot clothe in words what I have enjoyed in Christ for some time: he is unspeakably precious! O that blessed name, it scatters my fears, it warms and enlivens my hopes. I do love my Jesus a *little*, and ardently long to love him *more*. O, to be filled with this divine principle. Lord, thou knowest I cannot be satisfied till I awake up after thy likeness.

Dec. 8. The Lord has dealt bountifully with me since last date. He has lately given me to see that I possess more than I am always *sensible* of, and I may add, *grateful* for. He has also showed me that I suffer loss, at least in enjoyment, by not attending more constantly to what he has *already* done for me, and by dwelling too exclusively upon what I have not yet attained. When the Lord teaches, it is in a convincing manner: I felt the truth and importance of these sacred lessons. Yet, O Lord, make me more *pure in heart*, that I may continually *see thee* without one intervening cloud. I have already far more than I deserve; but when I consider the atoning blood of Jesus Christ, and see the infinite value of it, I know it is sufficient to purchase every blessing heaven can bestow. The atonement of Jesus is my *only plea*; and, therefore, I can set no bounds to my desires. Blessed Jesus, let thy love, like a strong cord, bind my wandering soul to thee. O let me every moment dwell in thy wounds, be held in thy heart, and lean on thy bosom. O cause me to bear thy image, and shine in thy borrowed rays; destroy sin, fill with thyself, and shine unto the perfect day.

— 26. My God has been unspeakably gracious to me these last two weeks. Thursday last, in the night, after a day of in-

disposition, God the Father and God the Son drew very nigh, and sweetly manifested their presence by faith; just when I was bemoaning my want of power to pray, being oppressed with pain. I cannot easily express what I felt, but my communion with Father and Son was deep and sweet. O for a grateful heart. This spring tide of spiritual enjoyment continued all next day, both when with others and when alone. Heaven seemed let down to earth. Yesterday, though afflicted with pain and sickness, I enjoyed almost uninterrupted communion with God, wherever I was, or however employed. O how faithful is my God. He has given many exceeding great and precious promises, and he is now beginning to accomplish them; after my long waiting, long praying, long expecting, and after my many disappointments, and trials, and conflicts. Lord, what shall I render unto thee. My God has indeed done great things for me since November last. I do not know what to say of it, only my communion with himself is, since that time, deeper and more constant; my views of Jesus more lively; my power to confess him before the world greater; and my soul in general more confirmed. I have more comfort in secret prayer, and my meditations on God and his dear Son are more delightfully sweet. Ejaculatory prayer is the constant food of my soul, and every moment my God is at my right hand. The above, as far as I know, is the state of my soul at present, and has been for weeks past; but, Lord, let the witness of thy blessed Spirit clearly ascertain to me what thou hast done for me, that I may give all the glory to thee, and take all the comfort thou intendest I should.

— 29. This day my peace has flowed as a deep, running, and silent river. I have been enabled, through mercy, continually to realize the presence of God, which brought a sweet solemnity upon my spirit; and the constant cry of my heart has been, O Lord, confirm and establish my soul. I had last night an extraordinary dream.* I place no sort of confidence in

* "Mrs. Carter," says the poet Cowper, in a letter to Lady Hesketh, "thinks on the subject of dreams as every body else does, that is to say, according to her own experience. She has had no extraordinary ones, and, therefore, accounts them only the ordinary operations of her fancy. Mine are of a texture that will not suffer me to ascribe them to so inadequate a cause, or to any cause but the operation of an exterior agency. I have a mind, my dear, (and to you I will venture to boast of it,) as free from superstition as any man living; neither do I give heed to dreams in general as predictive, though particular dreams I believe to be so. Some very sensible persons, and, I suppose, Mrs. Carter among them, will acknowledge that in old times God spake by dreams; but affirm, with much boldness, that he hath since ceased to do so. If you ask them why, they answer, because he has revealed his will in the Scripture, and there is no longer any need that he should instruct or admonish us by dreams. I grant that, with respect to doctrines and precepts, he hath left us in want of nothing; but has he thereby precluded himself in any of the operations of his providence?

dreams, but consider them in general as the wanderings of the imagination, ungoverned by reason; yet this dream seems somewhat remarkable. During sleep, I supposed myself in a delightful garden, meditating on divine things, and asking of the Lord to confirm my soul in the blessings he had bestowed, and that he would give me an evidence by which I might conclude on the certainty of his having accomplished in me his gracious promises. On looking up to the heavens the sky appeared remarkably clear and serene. Immediately there was seen in the firmament a ball of fire about the size of the full moon: from hence was emitted a stream of liquid flame, which darted down on me with a peculiar radiance. This, I was given to understand, was the influence of the Holy Spirit, the operations of which were so powerful upon my soul that they sensibly affected my body; and I stood in amazement at the power and goodness of my God. This representation, during sleep, might no doubt be occasioned by my prayers and meditations having run much on the same subjects before I went to rest. I leave it with the Lord, and would only pray that I may feel the operations of his Spirit as powerful upon my soul when awake, as I supposed I did when asleep.

— 30. To-day has been much as yesterday; if any thing different, my soul is more confirmed in the belief of what the Lord hath done for me, though my sensible comfort has not been quite so great. A divine calm has overspread my soul, and a secret testimony in my heart seems to say that the Lord has in a small measure accomplished in me his promises. But this must be much stronger, and the fruit of the Spirit much more abundant, before I can be satisfied. In the evening I heard a sermon from, "Said I not unto thee, if thou wouldst believe thou shouldst see the glory of God." The text forcibly struck me, and the whole sermon proved solid and substantial food to my soul.

— 31. A day in which my God made more of his goodness to pass before me than I am able to convey a proper idea of, either by speaking or writing. It is better felt than expressed. I enjoyed a stronger sense than ever of the witness of God's Spirit. While in the church, Jesus appeared clear to the eye of faith, as the King in his beauty; and God the Father seemed to bind my heart to himself in a *degree* I had not formerly expe-

Surely not. It is perfectly a different consideration; and the same need there was of his interference in this way, there is still, and ever must be, while man continues blind and fallible, and a creature beset with dangers which he can neither foresee nor obviate. His operations, however, of this kind are, I allow, very rare."—Haley's Life of Cowper, 2d edit., 4to, vol. i, p. 239.

For an able disquisition on the interesting phenomena of dreaming, the reader is referred to Professor Stewart's Elements of the Philosophy of the Human Mind, part i, chap. v, § 5.

rienced, and in a *manner* I cannot express. I felt dwelling in the secret place of the Most High. My mind was kept in perfect peace, and sweetly solemnized with holy awe, because so surrounded with, and so immediately in, the presence of Jehovah. O my God, what shall I say unto thee? I am lost in wonder, love, and praise! O confirm my soul! O keep me humble, and let the great deeps of redeeming love be more than ever broken up in my soul.

CHAPTER XI.—1776.

Diary continued.

January 3. The last year ended on Sunday night; which I endeavoured to spend with God in prayer, and in recalling the blessings he had bestowed upon me in the course of it. I found abundant cause both for gratitude and humiliation. Many were the severe distresses, both of body and mind, under which he had supported me, and from which he had graciously delivered me. O how richly, how bountifully, has he dealt with my soul! I cannot express all his goodness since November last. He has been accomplishing the great and precious promises which relate to the prosperity of my soul; and he will assuredly perfect what remaineth to be done. Lord, make me more grateful and more humble. Let not the foot of spiritual pride come against me. In the beginning of this year I most solemnly and cheerfully devoted myself, with all I have, and am, or ever shall have, to the Lord. I trust this was done in his own strength, and in the name of his beloved Son: and I asked many favours which I hope he will not withhold. May I more than ever find him as a wall of fire around me, and the glory in the midst; that I may be preserved from my foes. I am very weak, but O that I may be enabled to glorify him in soul, and body, and outward estate; and so enjoy him that not one intervening cloud may ever obscure my path; but light, unsullied light, always shine on me. "He that followeth me," says the Saviour, "shall not walk in darkness."

— 15. I have had many precious visits from above lately, but I have also had many severe inward conflicts; at times I felt as if in an agony, astonished and sore amazed. I was in hopes these severe trials were at an end, at least for a season, and that I should enjoy peace in all my borders; but it appears I must still fight on. Lord, thou seest what need I have to be more than ever clothed with the divine armour. Let me not turn back in the day of battle, but grant me

"A patient, a victorious mind,
That life and all things casts behind,

Springs forth obedient to thy call :
 A heart which no desire can move,
 But still t' adore, believe, and love ;
 Give me my Lord, my life, my all,"

What has, and does still add to my present uneasiness, is a degree of uncertainty respecting the true state of my soul. I dare not deny or call in question what the Lord has lately done for me, in reference to the blessing of entire devotion ; and yet, through the force of temptation, I cannot find that satisfactory evidence, from the witness and fruits of the Spirit, which I know to be the privilege of God's people :—not that I entertain any doubt of my acceptance in the Beloved ; but I want to be more clear, as it respects the grace of sanctification. Lord, stand by me in fierce temptation's hour, and make me faithful. Keep me from grieving thy Spirit ; and when this storm is past, may I experience more deep and lasting communion with thee.

— 16. My God has looked upon my distress, and rebuked the enemy. I now enjoy delightful fellowship with the Father and the Son ;—a holy serenity of mind—a divine tranquillity of soul. Forbid it, Lord, that I should ever sink from this : O let it continually increase. I have indeed been made deeply sensible, within these last few days, that I have nothing, and am nothing but what God makes me, and gives to me : I felt stripped of every thing but a power to confide, by naked faith, in the promises of a faithful God. I fought and feared till I seemed to sink down into a degree of stupidity and indifference. This was very alarming to me, who but a few days before enjoyed communion with the Father of mercies. O what is man ! How unstable !—Was this great transition caused by sin ? or was it the effect of sore temptation, permitted and sent to try and prove me, and by that means to fix me in a more permanent possession of the blessings bestowed ? Lord, give me to know this, if it be thy will : in thy light may I ever be able to distinguish between temptation and sin. O let me *now* walk more humbly with thee than ever : may I watch continually, and every moment prove that *thou art love*.

" Love excludes the selfish passion,
 Love destroys the carnal mind,
 Love is here my full salvation,
 Love to thee and all mankind."

O my God, fill me with this divine principle : permit me to launch far out into the depths of this unfathomable ocean, which neither knows bottom nor shore.

— 26. Waked unwell in body, but, O, my God has been good to my soul. I have enjoyed sweet inward rest, a sinking into God. I have felt the gracious influences of his Spirit visiting my soul, and, I would fain hope, increasing the fruits of the Spirit in me. My heart seemed like a garden, laid open to the

vivifying and meliorating beams of the sun. What the Lord has recently given, I find can only be retained by constantly living by faith, by constant watchfulness and constant prayer. Lord, keep me thus employed. But, after all, it is only thy almighty power that can preserve me; *these are* only the means appointed by thee. O my God, make me more grateful, more active in thy cause, and more passive to thy will.

— 27. Still the tender mercies of my God triumph over all my unworthiness. This also has been a day of sweet resting in God. I cannot easily express what I have enjoyed. It was not a spring tide of sensible comfort and strong joy; but an unutterable sweet peace and solid communion with the Father and Son; and this as much when with others as when alone. My views of Jesus, as the King in his beauty, have been so clear as I cannot clothe in language; I have been enabled also to confess him before men, which is surely my great honour. O how shall I sufficiently praise my God and Saviour! I felt it easy to-day to take up my cross. O the powerful influence of divine love in the religious life. O Lord, let all my powers be devotion, and all my passions love.

February 8. In the course of these eight days I have had manifestations of the goodness of my God; felt a measure of resting in him, and a hungering and thirsting after more communion with him, especially in the means of grace. I have felt such burning desires after a fuller possession of my beloved Lord as I cannot express, while, at the same time, he has felt very nigh unto me. I cannot sufficiently praise him, but he knows I desire not to breathe but for him; and to live every moment to him. Yet still I have cause to lament that I have so little of the fruit of the Spirit. With vehement longings, I breathe after a great increase. I feel reason to grieve I am not more active for God, and more faithful. I have great encouragement to embrace every opportunity which occurs; for my God condescends to bless my feeble attempts, both in writing and speaking to others. I still feel a conviction of what the Lord has lately done for me; but, O, it is surely the *smallest degree* of the blessing of *entire devotion* which I experience. How far short is it of what I expected. The Lord will increase it: but when I consider how sensible for months past he has made me of an increase of communion with himself; how constantly he has permitted me to see Jesus as the King in his beauty; and to feel closer union with him, with other outward evidences, I can no longer doubt: all these combine to convince my naturally unbelieving and suspicious heart, that the Lord has, in a measure, certainly done according to his promise. My business is to hold fast whereunto I have attained; and, through grace, daily to increase. Lord, help me so to do.

17. O my God, words fail to express the sense I feel of

the goodness thou hast made to pass before me this day. In morning devotion, the Lord felt delightfully near, and drew me near to himself. While dressing, I found it good and comfortable to meditate on what the Lord had done for me. All the forenoon I was a good deal hurried with outward things, but my mind was preserved in peace. Jesus was every moment nigh, more conspicuous to the eye of faith than ever. My communion with Father and Son was clear, distinct, and comfortable, in a degree which often amazed me, considering the many things that were continually occurring to draw or drive me from God. What I have enjoyed to-day has been infinitely more than I deserve, or am able to express. I believe I have had a measure of the witness of God's Spirit; not only for justification, (this, through mercy, has been allowed me for years,) but, also, for the late increase of grace. Lord, continue and increase it, and make me humble, watchful, and diligent.

— 20. Was rather hurried this morning, and yet composed at the same time. The surface of the soul is often agitated when there is solid happiness and peace at the bottom. In the afternoon and evening my soul was more comfortable, and the witness of the Spirit was still stronger for the last increase. At night was powerfully drawn to prayer with a Christian friend; and, while engaged in it, I felt what I cannot describe; such an amazing strength of faith as I had not before experienced. I seemed to have power with God and to prevail. It was as if by the eye of faith I had seen God on a throne of grace, bidding me ask what I would, with a promise that it should be given to me. O how I endeavoured to improve the opportunity by asking life, *spiritual life*, for those brought to my recollection, and they were numerous. The fervour of my spirit seemed too much for my body—it was a time never to be forgotten. Lord, grant me the petitions I offered up to thee, and accept of my grateful acknowledgments for thy rich goodness.

— 21. I find myself often tempted to unwatchfulness, and to an improper degree of cheerfulness; I want to be more sweetly solemnized. In all things I want to walk in the most excellent way. I want a greater equality of temper and spirit. Sometimes I feel a disposition to silence, and I fear this is frequently mistaken:—sometimes I speak to others with at least the appearance of displeasure;—sometimes, too quickly; and—sometimes, I speak too much. I wish all these things done away, that in all things I may adorn the gospel.

— 25. My God has been very good to me this day. Though much with others, and even in a crowd, he gave me sweet peace and holy liberty of soul. My fears were disappointed. I had power to realize the presence of the Lord by faith, and enjoyed holy composure of spirit. He gave me frequent opportunities for social prayer, which were comfortable.

Yet I generally perceive, upon examination afterward, how far I have come short. I then see how I might have glorified God more—that conversation might have been more profitable—that I should have been more deeply serious. Jesus, I fly to thy blood : O let me experience more of its virtue. Make me more holy, more thankful, more faithful, more humble. In the evening, when my visitants left me, O with what desire I got alone to converse with God, by prayer and meditation, and Jesus felt unspeakably precious. Truly I do love him, but I pant for power to love him more—to be lost in love—to know my every action, word, and thought spring from love.

— 27. This day, also, my God has been good. Secret prayer was sweet, and my meditations on Jesus were delightful in going out and coming in, and my views of God clear. The Lord seemed in mercy to be confirming my soul in the grace bestowed ; but still I want stronger evidence, a larger measure of the fruit of the Spirit, and a clearer testimony of the witness within ; I hope my spiritual borders will be greatly enlarged. Jesus is peculiarly precious to me ; my heart finds sweet repose in him by faith. I see him now constantly as the King in his beauty :

“Insatiate to the spring I fly,
I drink, and yet am ever dry.”

Lord, shall I ever be fully satisfied on this side the grave ? O give me more of thyself—occupy all space in me—stamp thy lovely image more fully on me.

March 10, Sunday. Was unwell in body, but felt drawn out to pray for the minister, and that I might obtain a blessing by him, and of a truth my God answered my prayer for his own name's sake. It was a season of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. He manifested himself to me in a wonderful manner. How precious did I feel Christ ! How gloriously he appeared to the eye of my faith ! I cannot express what I felt. I could scarcely refrain from speaking out. O my Jesus, what a vast unfathomable ocean of unexhausted love art thou ! What a heart-reviving prospect had I to-day of living for ever with Christ—a happy, an endless eternity. Amazing ! Amazing ! O the depths of the riches of redeeming love ! In the evening I went with enlarged expectation to the chapel, and there also the Lord was gracious to me. I enjoyed a divine composure, a heavenly serenity of soul, while my communion was with the Father and the Son. Truly God is good to Israel.

— 13. The Lord in great mercy is enabling me, through the kind assistance of others, to supply the wants of his poor children more than ever. From particular causes, I have it not in my power to give so much of my own money as I could wish ; and he inclines others to give me of their substance for the

poor. He knows what a delightful employment this is to me. He knows how much he has inclined me to draw out my soul to the hungry, and to satisfy the afflicted soul; and he thus gratifies and fulfils the desires he has given. O that he may make me faithful and wise in the disposal of such treasure.

— 26. Felt rather languid to-day, which distressed me. I dread losing what the Lord has bestowed, or sinking into a Laodicean spirit. I want to be *every moment all life, all love, ever on the stretch for God*; pressing on continually. Give me, Lord, the desire of my heart. I need a more watchful spirit, a greater silence of spirit, a more constant attention to an indwelling God. These two days I have felt as if too *outward*: Lord, deepen thy work in my heart. O remember thy precious promise, “that thy Spirit shall be in me as a well of water springing up unto eternal life.” At night found Christian conversation and social prayer very delightful and profitable; they diffused a heavenly sensation through my soul. But I cannot rest here. O, my God, draw my heart more closely to thyself, and possess my whole soul.

April 10. Spent much time in the forenoon with a Christian friend, and found it truly sweet to speak of Jesus, that delightful source of all my sacred joy. Just after united, for some time, in social prayer with the same person, when I enjoyed a season not to be forgotten; heaven seemed let down to earth. The sight of heavenly objects was so clear to the eye of my mind that faith seemed lost in sight. Jesus was more intimately nigh than I can possibly express; and, while I wrestled in prayer for blessings to my own soul and others, bodily strength seemed to fail through the ardour of my spirit. I even lamented the weakness of my body, which would not admit of my spending the whole night in prayer. When I got alone, immediately after I went again to a throne of grace, and felt much the same. O for gratitude, and more power to improve these precious seasons. But, in the midst of my happiness, Satan was at hand, attempting to mix my wine with water, by suggesting, “surely some dreadful trial is at hand, and your joy then will soon be at an end.” I had so often experienced this to be the case formerly that I did fear it.

— 22. Through mercy this has been a good day; I was carried above all I both feared and felt while hearing a sermon from, “All are yours, and ye are Christ’s, and Christ is God’s.” I cannot express what a precious time I had. On coming out of the church, I desired to be dissolved and to be with Christ. I could with ease have bid a final adieu to all below. Immediately after, enjoyed much Christian conversation. In the afternoon, had a call to speak for God which I felt a cross but took it up, and truly it was made a season of love. The Lord Jesus drew very near as the altogether lovely.

“How sweet and awful is the place,
 With Christ within the doors ;
 While everlasting love displays
 The choicest of her stores.”

— 24. I have been mercifully favoured with many opportunities of profiting abroad and at home. Spent much time in visiting the sick, and found it good to be so employed. My soul was animated and elevated while speaking of the things of God. I felt that if I had a thousand hearts I would have given them all to him : that if I had been empress of the world, I would have esteemed it my highest honour and richest privilege to have *devoted all* to God. This spirit and temper prevailed powerfully in my heart, when I was informed a certain person had said, “Had they been Lady Maxwell, they could not have given their hearts so soon to God.” Out of the abundance of my heart my mouth spake, “O my God, it is owing to thy *free, rich, and overflowing grace*, that ever I was inclined, or enabled, in any measure, to give my heart to thee.” *O possess it whole*, and let it evermore glow with love to thee ; may even my face shine with thy image. Make me steady ; fixed upon the rock of ages. May I prove *invincible* to all the power and malice of my enemies ; and to Thee *undivided glory shall* be ascribed.

May 15. I have been for some time very unwell in body, but the Lord has been very gracious to my soul. For several days I have been attempting to know the will of God concerning my leaving Edinburgh, for some weeks, for the benefit of my health. While meditating and praying on this subject, the following Scriptures were brought to my recollection with remarkable power and sweetness : “And the children of Israel took their journeys out of the wilderness of Sinai ; and the cloud rested in the wilderness of Paran. And they first took their journey according to the commandment of the Lord by the hand of Moses.”*—“Behold, I send an angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared.”† Precious words ! Alas, “And I will bring the blind by a way which they knew not ; I will lead them in paths that they have not known ; I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do to them, and not forsake them.”‡ From the intimations of divine Providence also, I rest satisfied that it is the Lord’s will I should go, and I leave the issue of it with God.

May 24. Left Edinburgh, and went to Blacksheils. What a precious time ! My God was unto me as a place of broad rivers the whole of the way. My communion with him and his dear Son was unspeakably delightful. Embraced the opportunities that offered for the spiritual good of others. This, I always find, brings an additional degree of strength to my soul.

* Numbers x, 12, 13. † Exodus xxiii. 20. ‡ Isaiah xlii, 16.

— 25. Set out this morning for Lauder, and dined there. Distressing things happened on the road, but my mind was preserved in peace. At this place enjoyed much sweetness in social prayer and Christian conversation. In the evening came to Kelso, much fatigued. Had much profitable conversation by the way, and felt power to realize the presence of God, and had comfort in prayer, secret and social.

— 26. (*Kelso, Sunday.*) Confined to bed all day with indisposition, and unable to fix my mind on divine subjects; but yet my God was with me. In the afternoon the Lord drew near, lessened my affliction, and increased my comfort.

— 27. Left Kelso, after attempting to do some good, and dined at a half-way house. Found it profitable to speak of the works of God by the way. My communion was sensibly with the Father and Son. Disagreeable accidents again occurred, but we were preserved, man and beast, and all fear respecting myself was prevented. How good is God! In the evening reached Wooller. Found it very comfortable by the way in meditation, conversation, and in attempting to do good to some we met with on the road. On coming to this place, having a clergyman with us, we went to the dissenting meeting house, where he gave us a good sermon. I cannot express how precious Jesus was to my soul! how clear to the eye of my faith! It was a time to be remembered. Quickly after, Satan was permitted to sift me with his temptations and fiery darts: but all is well when God is there.

— 28. Left Wooller this morning. At Moor-house the Lord made much of his goodness pass before me, especially in social prayer. Language fails to express what was enjoyed by myself and those who united with me. Many opportunities were embraced by myself and fellow travellers to do good in various ways; not, I hope, in vain. O for a heart to praise my God, and to remember and improve his goodness! In the evening reached Morpeth, under a sweet gale of heavenly influences. My heart burned within me while I spoke of the heights and depths of divine love: such an inexpressible sweetness diffused itself through my soul that I cannot convey an adequate idea of it to another. God the Father seemed as a pillar of cloud, shining bright by the way; and Jesus felt as if surrounding me with tenderness and love. My meditations on both were inexpressibly comfortable. On coming to Morpeth, late in the evening, many difficulties occurred: also precious opportunities of attempting spiritual good to others, which were cheerfully embraced; I trust not in vain.

— 29. Left Morpeth this morning, much comforted with the thoughts that good had been done, and that the Lord had sent us to *that* house against our own inclination for this very purpose. We were no sooner on the road than dangers and difficulties

surrounded us. I was wonderfully strengthened to bear them with composure, and to assist others; and we were graciously delivered. I was led much out in prayer to be made faithful to God, and was very sensible of the danger of being unfaithful. I felt as if moulded into the will of God. Reached Newcastle at two o'clock. Spent, repeatedly, some time in prayer concerning what I feared, and then left all to God. I must record it to the honour of his goodness and mercy, he heard and quickly answered me; and, to my great astonishment, did more than I could have expected. O how good is God! Still difficulties were in our way, and still, through mercy, we overcame them. In the evening we reached Durham, after seeing the watchful care of God in our preservation; and here we have stayed till now, the 30th. Lady Glenorchy has been very ill, and I have been much indisposed. Much of the faithfulness of God I have experienced since I came here. Social and secret prayer has been much blessed. Under many discouragements, several opportunities have been embraced for the spiritual good of others, both saints and sinners. Follow them with thy blessing, O God! and make me humble and grateful: continue thy goodness, and in much greater abundance.

— 30. Set out this morning from Durham. My joys did not abound by the way, but my faith remained the same. Lady G. continued weak and unwell. At midday reached Harrow-on-the-hill; here her illness increased, and for the first time I felt uneasy about her. I went alone, and endeavoured to cry to God: and truly he filled me with comfort. I never did enjoy such intimate union, and inexpressible delight in Christ. I felt sinking into him. We then pursued our journey, and all my anxiety was gone. Through mercy, and with comfort, we reached Darlington at night. Here, as in every place, something was attempted for God. As one opportunity was embraced, another offered. O, to be faithful! Many temptations to impatience and displeasure with others were cast in my way; but, through mercy, my mind was kept in peace. Their effect, I found, was this, they made me more and more to cease from man, and cleave closer to God. I felt stimulated to confess him in public, letting every other consideration fall to the ground. This always brings comfort and strength.

June 1. Left Darlington this morning, and about midday reached Northallerton. Here I enjoyed a profitable time in reading the Scriptures to Lady G., in speaking from them, and in social prayer. After dinner, when with others, my mouth was wonderfully open to speak of the mystery of redeeming love, and the great privileges of Christians. In the evening we arrived at Boroughbridge, after enjoying delightful meditation and conversation on the road. Here I spent much time in secret and social prayer, and found it good to be so employed. About nine

o'clock at night, through mercy, reached Knaresborough, unusually fatigued in body ; but the Lord was good to my soul. O what a week have I enjoyed of divine comforts ! of communion and fellowship with God ! How constantly have I been permitted to see the King, even Jesus, in his beauty. O for a grateful heart !

June 2. (Sunday.) My joys have been sensibly abated to-day. I thought I saw the cause, and my heart was pained within me : I could neither enjoy persons nor things. I feared sinking from God, and the thought distressed me. I attempted to confess God before men, but my own soul was languid. O to be faithful !

— 7. This morning we left Knaresborough, and reached York for dinner. Found power, by the way, to speak upon the word of God, and light seemed to shine upon it. While at this place, even when with others, I enjoyed inexpressible comfort in my soul ; delightful inward liberty. God was with me of a truth ! At night was severely tried, and felt keenly.

— 8. Visited the sick, and those devoted to God, and came to Tadcaster, where we dined. Here Jehovah thundered with his mighty voice, and lightnings flashed around with awful grandeur, but I could say, through mercy,

“ This awful God is ours,
Our Father and our love.”

He exerted his power, and manifested his goodness, in sparing the lives of those who trusted in him. When the storm abated I enjoyed much sweetness and liberty at the throne of grace, with my companions. At night came to Leeds, much tired : we had much profitable conversation on the road, and I enjoyed comfort in my soul.

— 9. (Sunday.) When I arose in the morning, my God and Saviour was at my right hand. In secret prayer I had nearness of access. Found it good to be in the house of God, morning, afternoon, and night, and social prayer was, as usual, delightful.

— 10. Still my fellowship is with God, and with his dear Son. Wherever I have been, he has given me power to realize his presence and to enjoy his love : persons, things, and places have led me up to him. We viewed the Infirmary and Cloth-hall, at Leeds ; and the Moravian establishment, at Putsey. I was keenly tried and much pained at the latter place : I also feared I had not acted and spoken as I should have done ; this added to my sorrow. I asked of the Lord power and opportunity to do what I well knew was his will in the present case, and he, in mercy, granted both, which satisfied me. At night we came to Halifax, very late, and much fatigued. Here also trials awaited me ; my body was afflicted, and my nerves and spirits weak, but still my God was good.

— 11. This morning my indisposition was removed, and I

enjoyed repeated opportunities of profiting, both in public and private, which were not in vain. Had comfort in my soul, and found conversation on divine subjects, and social prayer, truly profitable.

— 12. Felt tried with many untoward circumstances, and knew not how to act; but simply requested of God to direct into *his will*. The Lord, in mercy, heard my prayer, disappointed my fears, and greatly exceeded my expectations. In the morning went to Hickmanwhite, where we spent three hours in the house of God, and heard two good sermons by different ministers. I found it a delightful time: Christ was unspeakably precious, and clear to the eye of faith; he shone with increasing brightness to my soul, and through the day gave me power to speak closely to others on experimental religion. At night came to Rochdale, happy in my mind.

— 13. Unwell in body, and uneasy, fearing I had grieved the Spirit of God. What a mercy to have the fountain ever open. This morning came to Manchester. By the way, my heart was melted with a sense of the goodness of God, compared with my own unworthiness, and was amazed at his mercy and tenderness toward me. Was much in company while in this place, yet had power in the midst of it to enjoy God, and to act for him. My soul pants to live more to him, to be more holy in heart and life. Came to Bolton at night.

— 14. Enjoyed a delightful time in morning devotion: my faith was strong; a loving confidence in my God prevailed in my heart. Here, also, endeavoured to be useful to the souls of my fellow creatures. Dined at Chorley. Felt power to speak for God by the way, and by faith beheld God the Father, and God the Son. The Lord, in great tenderness, shows me what I yet lack, what is amiss, and also enables me to cry for a supply, and then graciously bestows it. Lord, thy goodness is unsearchable! O make me grateful, make me faithful, make me fruitful, for thy name's sake! Came to Preston at night.

— 15. Dined at Garstang. Temptation was strong: I looked to the Lord, and endeavoured to stay my mind on God. He weans me more and more from created good, and shows me that He only is truly good. Lord, I believe it. Came to Lancaster at night; was unwell in body but comfortable in soul, and temptations were abated.

— 16. Sunday. Remained at home all day through indisposition. Had much profitable conversation on the things of God, but not much joy.

— 17. This morning my faith was strong, and my views clear, but suffered a degree of heaviness through manifold temptations. O that in all I may glorify God! Came to Kendal at night: was very comfortable here! Christian conversation was profitable, and social prayer sweet. Embraced the opportunities which were presented for benefiting others.

— 18. Came to Penrith. Here had a good deal of conversation with the landlady on the subject of religion, and gave her some serious books.

— 19. Dined at Carlisle. Had power to converse on the things of God, but was unwell in body. Here enjoyed repeated opportunities for social and secret prayer. Found the worship of God delightful, especially at the cathedral, during the afternoon service. I felt the presence of Jehovah, and made a solemn and unreserved surrender of myself to God, and found it very delightful. This I repeated at the inn. Came to Langtown at night. By the way the Beloved of my soul was exceedingly precious.

— 20. Dined at Langholm. On the road enjoyed the presence of God, with clear views of divine objects, but felt an unusual incapacity, or rather want of inclination, to converse on even my favourite topics. Enjoyed much time for prayer, with an increase of power to assist others. Came to Hawick at night, and still the Lord was good.

— 21. Set out this morning very early, indisposed in body, but better in soul. Found it good to speak on the things of God, and to read his word. Breakfasted at Selkirk. Felt pained, on leaving this place, that I had not attempted to do more for God. Dined at Bankhouse. By the way the Lord preserved me in time of danger; but I felt grieved, fearing I had not acted as I ought to have done. O how narrow is the way of entire devotion! What constant watchfulness is necessary! At Bankhouse my mouth was opened to speak for God; my hands were strengthened, and my heart comforted. In the evening came to Dalkeith; stopped a few minutes, but heard melancholy tidings, which obliged us, though late, to go on to Edinburgh. Through mercy my mind was very comfortable, and my God brought me to my habitation in peace, after having experienced much of his goodness. He had also preserved my family during my absence. How great is his faithfulness.*

July 27. I have for many weeks experienced much of the goodness of the Lord. I have wrestled much with God; my fluttering spirit has fatigued my breast. Jesus has drawn me sweetly on, both by the attractions of his beauty and by the invitations of his word. He has been unspeakably precious to me; his name has been as ointment poured forth; my meditations on him have been truly sweet; he has appeared altogether lovely. He also encourages me by his precious promises to press forward.

* The editor has been induced to insert the above extract, which describes the manner in which her ladyship invariably travelled; from a hope that other Christian travellers may be stimulated by it to follow such an excellent example. They might thus become the honoured instruments of scattering the seed of life on many hitherto sterile and uncultivated spots; and, "instead of the brier, might come up the myrtle tree."

The following passage, spoken in reference to his church, has been frequently and powerfully impressed on my mind. Ought I not to take encouragement and comfort from it? "The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save; he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love; he will joy over thee with singing," Zeph. iii, 17. Precious words! What can we desire more?

August 2. My God has increased my faith, and love, and desire, since last Sabbath, when I had an opportunity to partake of the ordinance of the supper. I experienced on that day more than I seemed able to enjoy; yet not a rapturous joy, but strong faith, full confidence; and since then my spiritual borders have been, in a small measure, enlarged. My fellowship with the Father and Son is more intimate and uninterrupted. I am enabled to realize their presence wherever I am. My meditations are delightful, my views clear, and many, very many opportunities are afforded for the spiritual and temporal good of others, with power to embrace them. I enjoy an increase also of the fruits of the Spirit.

— 30. Enjoyed a delightful season while meditating on divine things, on the goodness of God to my soul, and on the love of Jesus. On riding out soon after, I was exposed to danger; and, through the weakness of my nerves, was greatly agitated for a few minutes; but the Father of mercies quieted my fears. What a strong passion is fear! how involuntary! How poor and weak this mortal frame! To how many painful feelings is the soul, that divine spark, subjected while imprisoned in it, and from which no degree of grace can procure an exemption. In the evening spent much time in seeking to promote the spiritual benefit of some young ones, and it was truly a profitable season; made so by the cheering, animating, delightful presence of my God and Saviour. O how richly does my God repay my feeble attempts to glorify him. He is not a hard master; he rewards liberally.

Sept. 10. I enjoyed many privileges to-day, but from pain and sickness could not improve them as I wished. Yet my God was good. I still fear stopping short, and see clearly my works are not perfect. This day met with a most unexpected trial. I endeavoured to give it up to the Lord, and was preserved in more peace than I expected. My God, let thy will be done, and may I heartily acquiesce! O for more holiness! In general, I find that every degree of increase in the grace of God is preceded by a proportionable degree of humiliation and self-abasement. What cause have I to be humbled in the dust! I need to pray always; and yet I am not so much as I ought to be in this duty. O for a more prevailing spirit of prayer, and more constant watchfulness!

— 12. The Lord convinces me that I cannot retain the measure of grace already given, without continually pressing on for more. He shows me how much is yet to be done in me, but does not permit the sight to depress me. He, on the contrary, encourages me to seek after and expect all that holiness which Christ has purchased for me. He draws me sweetly on by the consolations of his Spirit, and by the words of his grace. He preserves, and greatly comforts me in the time of trial and danger. O how great a privilege is it to have a God to go to in seasons of necessity!

October 2. It has been a season of severe trial since this day week. I have not been so much alive to God, nor enjoyed power to wrestle in prayer, neither that degree of delightful intercourse with my heavenly Father. I have been restless and uneasy, though perhaps not enough so. I have gone from reading to prayer, from prayer to reading, and from that to meditating, but still could not find what I sought—intimate communion with God. I cannot perceive any particular cause for this change. Faith discovered God the Father; I still saw Jesus as the King in his beauty; and still I could believe and plead the promises; but I did not feel such a degree of spiritual life nor so much comfort as usual, and my spirit was grieved. Surely the Lord has some wise end in view by this severe dispensation. O that it may be fully effected in me! I fear lest I should have grieved the Holy Spirit, and thus brought it on myself. Give me, Lord, to see this, if it is so. I have felt very defective in watchfulness; but alas! what can we do when the Lord seems at a distance. He is our only proper spring of every degree of spiritual obedience: all our wellsprings of life are in him.

— 6. Nature was conquered this morning, and my heart was comforted in secret. I felt a greater degree of spiritual life. In the forenoon, at church, enjoyed a sense of divine presence: Jesus appeared lovely to the eye of faith. O the power of divine love! My God, give me every moment to experience its utmost power, its transforming efficacy. O to be lost in love! I have been sensible to-day of a greater abstraction of heart from the things of time and sense, and a proportionable increase of nearness to heavenly objects: the one is, I believe, a consequence of the other. The Lord teaches me more and more the vanity of all below the sun. I feel also at times the fiery darts of Satan, which makes Christ precious. At present I am very sensible of the necessity of keeping near to God: it is a dangerous time on many accounts. O to be able to stand steady to the end, firm as a wall of brass, and as an iron pillar strong: unmoved by threatening or reward; uniformly good, as a witness for the truth. Lord, this is my ambition.

— 21. I have this day a fresh proof of the faithfulness of the Most High, and of the certainty of the accomplishment

of the promises, which I would here record to the glory of God and for the comfort of my soul. Some weeks ago the person who taught my little charity school was taken from me; and this caused me considerable perplexity. The Lord was entreated to provide another, if the continuance of the school would be for his glory. My mind was impressed with these words, "Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord," Exodus xiv, 18. This, for a time, removed my fears, but difficulties increasing, they again returned. I cried to the Lord, and his word again came to my relief: "He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him; he also will hear their cry, and will save them," Psalm cxiv, 19. This again calmed my mind, and when in prayer one day, in secret, pleading with the Lord that he would direct me to a proper teacher, there was evidently set before my mind a person I had never seen, but remembered having heard years ago that he taught a school. This intimation I kept to myself, and, like Mary, pondered upon it, and at the same time made all proper inquiries respecting the person. Others, well qualified, were repeatedly applying for the place, but still I thought the man thus brought to my recollection would certainly be procured. I still, however, proceeded cautiously, and guarded against an improper haste. I also continued to cry to the Lord for direction. After a competent space of time, and many inquiries, this very individual has engaged this day to teach the school; and he appears well qualified in all things, to my mind, that is material; above all, he seems a most serious young man, and desirous to glorify God, by being useful to immortal souls. I do not know how he may turn out, but feel at present sweetly satisfied that the Lord has provided him. What praise is due to a prayer-hearing and a prayer-answering God!

— 22. Words fail to express what I have enjoyed of the goodness of God to-day. Faith seemed lost in fruition. My views of the Father and the Son appeared to have attained an unusual degree of brightness; almost meridian. O what an exuberance of goodness have I been permitted to enjoy! so much so, that my heart began to meditate terror. Satan tempted me to think, "Surely some great distress is at hand." Indeed I have often hitherto found that the Lord, before any trial or affliction, has been uncommonly gracious to me. But why should I anticipate evil? Teach me, Lord, properly to enjoy and improve present mercies. I fear I did not improve to the utmost what I have enjoyed to-day. O to feel more of the transforming power of grace in my heart and life! I long to be more holy, more like my Jesus, that all my nature may show forth the glories of the Lamb. I want to drink deeper into his Spirit; to experience a greater *oneness* with him; a more intimate union with the Source of bliss. O, I would be all divine, as far as humanity will permit; in other words, I wish to enjoy all that conformity

to my Lord it is possible to enjoy while in the body. I am still favoured with opportunities of attempting to do good to others, and have much delight in the employment.

November 27. My views of Jesus have been clear, my mind fixed on God : much comforted with divine love in conversation and social prayer. More than ever, my God favours me with opportunities of acting for him, by doing good in various ways ; and in mercy he also gives more inclination and power to be thus employed. I desire to be full of good works, *and free from all dependence upon them*. If my heart does not greatly deceive me, *this* is not my temptation : all my trust is in Jesus : *here* my anchor is fixed. What a stream of constant happiness flows from a union of soul with him ! I do hope that the Lord, agreeably to his promise, is establishing, strengthening, and settling my soul. I have felt for the last twelve months more rooted and grounded in love, and in the ways of God in general, and yet find less confidence in myself. The more God does for me, the more do I feel dependent upon him. My strength consists in living by faith upon Christ. He is my all in all : yet,

“ For closer communion I pine,
I long to reside where thou art.”

O glorious thought, that I shall dwell to all eternity with him !
Transporting prospect !

December 6. In the course of these eight days I have experienced much of the goodness of God : have enjoyed much sweet and more uninterrupted communion with him than usual. My Jesus has been ever with me, as my King, *glorious*, and yet so *condescendingly* gracious, as to constrain me to love him. Often, when his name has been mentioned, as usual, I have tasted ineffable sweetness : my heart has leaped within me with joy that he was mine. What must it be to dwell for ever with him, when a small taste of his love here is so delightful ? O what am I, that I should be thus favoured ! Lord, make me more grateful, more humble, and enable me to improve thy goodness more. I am still permitted, at times, to feel particularly my own weakness, and what Satan would do, if allowed : *this* makes me dread self-dependence, and enhances in my estimation the value of the Saviour. I am still, also, deeply sensible of the peculiar goodness of the Lord when I attempt any thing for his glory, in the way of assisting others. O how gracious is he on these occasions ! But still, in all I come short, and have much cause to be ashamed and humbled.

CHAPTER XII.—1777.

Diary continued.

January 1. My God has made his goodness to pass before me this day also. He has sweetly drawn out the desires of my heart after himself, and given me by faith to see Him who is invisible. O what a substantial good is God to the believing soul; and when he more sensibly manifests his presence, what a heaven does it produce! Upon a review of the last year, I find infinite cause to praise my God, who, in the course of it, has done more for me than ever. He has accomplished many of his precious promises, and given me to enjoy communion with himself; and to feel a more constant sense of my union with his dear Son: and in a more lively and clear manner, he permits me to see him continually as the King in his beauty, and to dwell always under the covert of his precious blood. Indeed I am not sufficiently grateful for what has been done for me within these last fourteen months; neither am I sufficiently sensible of it: and this principally because I see so much more which necessarily remains to be done, and so much before me not yet obtained. I see how much I stand in need of sinking deeper into God, of being more deeply rooted in his love, and more free from wanderings. I cannot bear the thought of resting short of any measure of grace attainable here. Yet how slowly do I move in the heavenly road! amazing, indeed, is my tardy pace. O how much more so must it appear in the eye of God, and of angels!

— 25. Since the 18th, it has been a time of trial, especially by sickness, which brought a degree of languor upon my spirit. It generally has this effect upon me, less or more, on which account I do not feel so resigned to bodily affliction as is, I believe, my privilege; though I believe a degree of this depression of spirit I must experience while in the body. How comfortable the prospect of being an inhabitant of *that city* to all eternity, where none ever say they are sick. Till then, O my God, enable me to pass the time of my sojourning here, not only in thy fear, but in as perfect resignation to all thy dispensations, whether joyous or adverse, as humanity will admit. In the course of these days past, my *faith* has been much the same, though my *joy* was not so great. I have enjoyed a sweet consciousness of my union with Jesus; my place of defence has been the munition of rocks; I have been fed with the bread of life, and the water of life, according to the gracious promises of a faithful God. I have also had such communion with the Father of spirits as to make me wonder that a holy God could

dwell with one that had so little of his image. O how ardently has this made me breathe after more holiness! my heart has panted after the largest degrees of sanctification. I have enjoyed some sweet seasons in secret and social prayer, and this evening felt my faith for the blessing received in November, 1775, confirmed; also my expectation of retaining it strengthened. Daily opportunities of doing good are granted me, with strong desires, and some power to use them. Blessed be God for all his mercies!

February 5. In the course of these eight days, I have felt variously. Have often had sweet views of Jesus, and at times felt him so nigh, so very clear to the eye of faith, that faith seemed lost in sight and enjoyment. I have been constrained to speak of him to others as the chiefest of ten thousand. What ineffable sweetness do I taste when the name of Jesus is mentioned! an instantaneous heaven springs up in my soul. But O, how is it, when so highly favoured, that I do not grow more like my divine Master! Surely I do not improve the glorious visit as I ought, else I should gain more conformity to him: my soul longs for more of the divine image. I feel ashamed before God and man that I am not more holy, considering the advantages I enjoy. O Lord, remove the cause, that the effect may cease; and make me, as the King's daughter, all glorious within. Every day I look to make progress in the divine life; but alas! how are my expectations disappointed: for in all I do, or say, I come short; yet the Lord bears with me. But shall it be always thus? I enjoy God in secret prayer, especially in the morning; and I enjoy him in social prayer, in conversation, meditation, and reading: but how can all this be, when I am so unlike him? O to be holy as God is holy; to be meek and lowly as Jesus; to sink into all the depths of humble love, and rise to all the heights of Christian confidence. I may say with the poet,—

“ My earth thou water'st from on high
 But make it all a pool;
 Spring up, O well, I ever cry,
 Spring up within my soul.
 With me I know, I feel thou art,
 But this cannot suffice;
 Unless thou plantest in my heart
 A constant paradise.”

This is truly the language of my heart.

March 26. These last seven weeks I have been severely afflicted in body, and part of the time no less so in my soul. O may my God sanctify the afflictive dispensation. He has promised that I shall be brought out of it as gold seven times purified. In the beginning of this illness, the Lord was exceedingly gracious. I could not express what I enjoyed in the love of

Jesus; truly God dealt bountifully with me. But afterward I was left to feel my own weakness, and to grapple with strong temptations. Satan thrust sore at me, one night, when very unwell, so that I was ready to fall and utterly sink. I cried to the Lord, and he made his word my support. The Lord has raised me up, though still weak; but I have been closely tempted and tried since, and my spiritual joy is much abated. I do not feel so near to God, nor my views so clear, neither my faith so strong: I feel as if out of my element. My enemies have been permitted to make great havoc in my soul, at least to my own apprehension; but surely the Lord will rebuke the adversary, and greatly increase me for his own name's sake. I feel deeply unworthy of it. O how far back do I feel in the divine life, Lord! restore to me the joy of thy salvation. O bring my soul out of trouble, that I may praise thee; and cause this affliction to bring forth the peaceable fruits of righteousness.

May 3. In the course of this last fortnight I have felt variously. O that I could say I had improved much! This I dare not say, but think I can with some degree of truth affirm that I have hungered and thirsted after it: and if my heart does not deceive me, I have sunk deeper into God; felt more fixed in him as in my centre. I have experienced more inward recollection, my soul more stayed on God. Jesus has been truly precious; my heart has indeed felt him nigh: and he has proved a source of sweet consolation to my soul.

June 12. Still I have cause to praise God, who deals bountifully with me: still I am, through mercy, permitted to enjoy sweet fellowship with my God and Saviour; and, in general, am kept under the influences of the Holy Spirit: O what praise is due! Yesterday, and the day before, I felt keen anguish, from a fear that I had grieved the Spirit of God. O how the thought pained me! I cannot say easily what I felt. May almighty power and goodness keep me every moment exercised as my Lord would have me! O to be preserved from every touch of blame. If this is possible while in the body, let me, O my God, happily prove it. I find it is only by looking to Jesus I can either increase or retain what he has bestowed. The Lord does, I think, more than ever, enable me to live by believing in him, and looking to him. My life, in a small degree, is one continued looking up to him, dwelling under the covert of his blood, and realizing the presence of my God; *this* spreads a heavenly serenity through my mind, and sweetly solemnizes my spirit. The more I live after this manner, the more fixedness of thought I experience, the deeper I sink into God; but, after all, how poor my progress. O for a quicker pace, a swifter motion! Still morning devotion in secret is sweet; I enjoy comfortable access to my God, and am enabled to plead the promises, and depend upon them as "yea and amen" in Jesus.

— 19. Where shall I begin to praise my God ! I am astonished at his goodness when I consider and feel how unworthy I am ; how unprofitable, how unfaithful, how far short in every respect. Yet he condescends still to let me see by faith his unclouded face. In comparison of former experience, he has brought me into a wealthy place ; but I am much short of what I expect. He has promised greater things, and I know he is faithful, and will perform all his promises. If any thing, my communion with God is increased : O what sweetness do I taste in Jesus ! how precious is he ! how constant my sense of a vital union with him !—as the branch in the vine, so do I feel in him. But I long to drink deeper into his Spirit, yea, to be filled with the entire fruit of the Spirit. I think he gives me an increasing deadness to the world, together with a proportionable degree of life in the ways of God. In the midst of the divine comforts I enjoy, Satan tries many ways to tempt and distress me. On last Lord's day, though confined, my spiritual consolations were so great I was strongly tempted to believe it all a delusion, because they were not of a more transforming nature ; but Jesus lifts up a standard when the enemy thus pours in. God appeared so clear to the eye of faith, it was not possible it could be a deception, and Jesus shone into my soul with transcendent brightness. Indeed I have reason to blush I am not more holy ; but I must not deny the goodness of my God because of this : no, rather I must cleave closer to him.

— 30. Since my last date, truly God has been good : I cannot express what I enjoy in Jesus ; I am, through amazing mercy, privileged to walk with him, and talk with him, as a man with his friend. I ever feel him nigh, though the blessed view is not always attended with the same degree of comfort ; but in general I am made to sit in heavenly places with him, to cleave to him by a lively faith, to dwell under the covert of his blood, and to follow after him. While I *now* write, my heart feels him sweetly nigh, the eye of faith beholds him clear. In a small measure, I enjoy the accomplishment of that precious promise, Zech. ii, 10. O Lamb of God, was ever love like thine ! I still enjoy sweet access to God in secret and social prayer ; and prove it very comfortable to talk to others upon the concerns of their immortal souls. I frequently have much of the presence of my Beloved in the great congregations, in different places. How great my obligations to free grace ! I do long to make suitable returns. O for more love to God, more power to live to his glory ! I am not enough on the stretch for God : I do not hold forth the word of life constantly in that amiable light that I wish. I am often pressed down with indisposition of body, with weak spirits and nerves. This causes me to appear at times as if I were unhappy, which grieves me ; I wish to show *to all* that real religion can raise human nature above every

sorrow. While in the body, I know we must feel; we shall suffer from various causes and quarters. My heart is pained from day to day, with the dishonour done my God by those that know him not; and, alas, by too many that profess a knowledge of him. These causes will perhaps more or less remain until I join the church triumphant; the only *place* and *company* that claim, and possess, an entire freedom from sin.

— 16. In the course of these two weeks I have been more tempted, and my spiritual enjoyments have not been so great as before; though still I feel deep cause to praise my God. In general I rest in him; yet at times I feel uneasy, perhaps partly from these weaknesses, that are more or less inseparably connected with humanity, and partly from temptation. I find that there is nothing so much tends to compose the mind, and to keep it religiously recollected, as a constant sense of the presence of God. If at any time, from some of the above causes, I am in danger of being unhinged, a look to God, by faith, sets all to rights. Immediately all the affectionate powers of the soul are collected, and fixed upon God, as on their proper centre, and a heavenly serenity ensues. It is more than can be expected, while in this vale of tears, to know no seasons of weakness. May I be enabled every moment to lay as passive clay in the hands of my God, and have all the good pleasure of his will take place in me. This is sufficient, but indeed my heart pants with strong desire to feel the utmost power of transforming grace.

August 8. In the course of these eighteen days, I have experienced great and frequent vicissitudes of feeling; sometimes very comfortable, at others, much grieved, dejected, and tempted. Upon the whole, my spiritual enjoyments have not been so great as usual, and I have feared sinking from God. Yet he has been very gracious in enabling me to help others, in soul, body, and outward estate. He has favoured me with opportunities of strengthening the weak hands, confirming the feeble knees, softening the hard heart, and greatly encouraged the people to trust in him; both by prayer, conversation, and letters. *This* is all his own doing, and therefore to *him* be all the glory. I have been lately unusually led out to wrestle in prayer with God for more of the divine life, and to hunger and thirst after every blessing purchased for me; but still I do not advance as I wish—still I feel painfully short of what I would be. I am amazed at my unprofitableness, unfaithfulness, and unwatchfulness. O for *all* the grace *God* is willing to give; and power to use it all for him. When, Lord, when will it be? I enjoy much sweetness in pleading the promises in secret and social prayer; but I cannot express how much my heart is pained that I do not love and serve God better, that I have not more of the divine image. I would be all on fire for God, a flame of love. I would experience unbounded confidence in him, unlimited resignation to him,

and have even my countenance strongly marked with a deep sense of his presence. But alas! I am far from this; I am not so faithful as I ought to be to his inward teaching; I am not all attention to his secret voice; I am easily unsettled; I want a greater equality of spirit and temper; I would be always the same; neither much elated nor depressed; but continually serene, humble, and cheerful: I want more silence of spirit, more victory over my tongue, a deeper and more constant consciousness that God is with me, and sees me. I need more of that perfect love that casts out fear; that degree of it which would enable me to cleave alike to God in sickness as in health, in pain as in ease, in death as in life. How good is God, who bears with me! and, in spite of all my failings, yet gives me to see him and his dear Son by faith; and keeps me constantly sensible of my union with him. Within these few days, he has rather increased me; he gives me to see his gracious hand in what befalls me, and makes me to believe he will, according to his promise, be my counsellor in all things. Yet I feel I need patience to wait the accomplishment of the promise: I am often tempted to impatience, but as often checked immediately. Forgive my haste of unbelief, O thou God of love, and enable me to wait patiently on thee. I need more patience, I find, also, with my fellow creatures. O Lord, thou seest how much I need an increase of every grace of thy Holy Spirit. O bestow it this day, that I may praise thee.

Sept. 10. I have been lately variously affected and tried, and my comforts not so great. O to be always the same! How devoutly to be wished, but I believe not to be expected while in the body! Yet I may look for that measure of grace which shall keep me cleaving to God in all states. O my God, give me this! enable me to glorify thee at all times, and it sufficeth. Of late, I have been strongly tempted in many ways, and I fear not faithful. O how this mortal body presses down the soul! As it respects attempting to do good, I do not know that there is any change, though my attempts are not always attended with the same degree of comfort. I have grieved lately, fearing my communion with God has been less. O that he may remove the cause and the effect, and accomplish all his promises. I go from here to-morrow for bodily health. O that as usual my soul may be happy! may I have much cause to praise him when I return.

Oct. 6. On Friday last my God brought me home in peace to my family, with my health better than when I went from hence. The ways of my God toward me, in the course of my journeying, have been mercy and truth, though I have not enjoyed such strong consolations as I generally do. The state of my soul has rather consisted in heart-melting and deep convictions of my shortcomings, which tended much to humble me before God. Yet I felt a desire to do all possible good. At first, felt reluctant to this; but *that* conquered, my desires and opportuni-

ties were increased ; my encouragement great ; and my soul was thereby strengthened and much comforted. The means in which the Lord gave me most of his presence was prayer, especially social. I seldom bowed my knee, but my God and Saviour drew nigh. Since I came home, I feel a sensible increase of thirsting after righteousness, and of communion with my God ; my views are more clear, and my faith stronger. The storm of temptation is abated, and succeeded by a sweet calm ; my bodily health also is better, my nerves and spirits more firm, and I have found my family and connections well. It is mercy all !—what praise is due !

Nov. 3. For these last seventeen days, my God has dealt indeed bountifully with me. Close, sweet, deep, and almost uninterrupted, has been my fellowship with God the Father and Son. O what a glorious privilege is communion with God ! it is better felt than expressed : it is, as a good man describes it, the lively actings of the soul upon God by faith in holy exercises ; in which he communicates to us the sense of his favour and acceptance, filling us with joy and peace, and making us abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost, and shedding abroad the sense of his love in our heart. Amazing goodness and condescension ! Astonishing that sinners should be thus favoured ! What in his love do I not possess ? He is with me by night and by day ; my last thoughts at night are his, and my first in the morning spring forth to him. He unveils the glories of eternity to my faith ; the land that is afar off is brought nigh ; wherever, I walk, or move, I meet my Jesus, who possesses all my affections. In a small degree, I can say with Dr. Watts,—

“ If love, that pleasing power, can rest
In heart so hard as mine,
Come, dearest Saviour, to my breast,
For all my love is thine.”

— 22. O that all my powers might praise my God, who deals so bountifully with me. Still I dwell on high. Through abounding mercy, I have had many sweet seasons in the course of these eight days, in public, private, and secret ; in conversation, meditation, reading, hearing, and praying. I have enjoyed habitual communion with God ; clear views of, and sweet intercourse with, my beloved Saviour. He has often (to use the language of Scripture) made my soul as the chariots of Aminadab, and caused me to sit in heavenly places with himself. He has shone into my soul in all his attractive beauty, and captivated my heart. In general, he now teaches me more than ever to live continually by faith upon him ; he is my life, my strength, my comfort, my all. Yet still I am weak, I am only strong in his strength, and in his pure light alone I see light. I cannot praise him as I would : *now*, while I write, how sweetly nigh do I feel him—how clear by the eye of the mind do I behold him !

O Jesus, what hast thou done for me ! My soul longs, and frequently attempts, to set forth his beauty to others, and, I hope, not always in vain.

— 27. My God has increased his goodness to me since Sunday last ; I have indeed dwelt in the secret place of the Most High, and abode under the shadow of the Almighty. My views of Jesus have been brighter than ever, and my intercourse by faith more intimate and sweet. I am not able in the language of mortality to express what I now enjoy in him ; and what uninterrupted communion I am permitted to hold with God the Father. Yesterday was indeed one of the days of the Son of man ; when meditating upon divine things, and fearing, in the view of trials, unfaithfulness to God, the *bright glare* of eternity seemed to obscure, or rather to annihilate, all below the sun. Future glory was unfolded to my view. I felt almost as an inhabitant there, and more than ever formerly did I feel under the powers of the world to come. This was after conversing with a Christian friend about two hours on the things of God : but Satan soon suggested, surely more severe trials than ever are now at hand ; which was likely to embitter my present heaven. I started back, as it were, and feared to receive more from God. Lord, how wonderful are thy dealings with me ! how good thou art in answering my prayers ; for this *last* was an immediate return to my request. I asked the Lord, in order to make me faithful to him in the time of trial, which I viewed at hand, that he would give me to see and feel time swallowed up in eternity, that every worldly consideration, such as the fear of man, &c., might vanish.

Dec. 27. Various causes have concurred to interrupt my writing, but I find I have suffered loss by it. It is indeed a good thing to watch constantly over our heart and life, to attend diligently to all the Lord's dealings toward us, and then to record them for our benefit : nothing but necessity should make a Christian neglect it. For these last four weeks my comfort has not been so great. I have been greatly tried in body, mind, and outward estate ; and the Beloved of my soul has not felt so nigh, which made me feel them heavier. My spirits and nerves, also, have been affected, and all together conspired to bring me into heaviness. I have been unusually detained from the public means by affliction of body, and have feared continually lest I should get into self-indulgence, which has added to my trials. But, according to the wonted goodness of my God, though I am unworthy, I look to be increased. At times, I have been refreshed with a sense of the presence of my God, and Jesus has also been with me : but my communion with the Father and the Son has not been so near and sweet as usual. I have felt a partial distance, and one reason of this has been, I think, a necessity of much attention to outward and worldly things, with a

variety of trials from without and within. I have been harassed, and sometimes driven, and sometimes drawn, from steadily looking to Jesus.

CHAPTER XIII.—1778.

Diary continued.

Jan. 1. On this first day of the new year, I feel inclined (may I be enabled) to make a fresh dedication of myself, with all I have and am, to *my God*; yea, a more *full* and unreserved surrender of myself than ever. Lord, accept my sacrifice; O may the altar sanctify the gift! and through thy sovereign grace, may I live more to thee, do more for thee, and prove more of thy sanctifying and saving power. May my communion and fellowship with thee be sensibly increased, and continued, if spared through this ensuing year. May I be made more faithful to thee, to thy cause, to my fellow creatures, and myself. Lord, I would also offer up to thee my family; O be the God of it, and enable me to walk before thee in it, in a perfect manner; ruling it *only* by giving light, by a deportment becoming the gospel. O how defective hitherto! I would also, O Lord, offer up to thee all my relations; O accept of them, and make them, by faith in Jesus, thy children. O let these requests be registered in thy book of life, and answer me in the joy of my heart concerning them.

I feel a small increase of grace in my soul, more comfort in prayer, more love to God, and the fiery darts of the enemy are not so frequent. Upon a review of the last year, I find many mercies, spiritual and temporal, for which to be thankful. I have been favoured with much of the sweet presence of my God, and his dear Son: with much inclination and a degree of power, and very many opportunities of doing good to the souls and bodies of my fellow creatures. I give them, Lord, up to thee; follow them with thy blessing. I have also been favoured with many deliverances, with regard to soul, body, and outward estate. Lord, powerfully sanctify them to my good. But alas! I find likewise many, very many things to lament; much unfaithfulness, unfruitfulness, ingratitude, &c., &c. O what is man! By nature what a compound of all evil; and even after, by the great goodness of God, he hath passed from death unto life, O how defective! what continual shortcomings! Lord, *thou knowest* my pen does not note these things as words without a meaning, only commonplace expressions; no, my *heart feels* the *truth* of what I now write, and I most sincerely regret that there should be cause for it. Help, Lord, O help thy unworthy servant to love thee more and serve thee better.

— 30. (Friday.) This has been a precious day. I have experienced much of the goodness of the Lord since I wrote last. But on Wednesday and Thursday an unusual degree of languor overspread my soul, for which I could not account, and I did not seem so much alarmed as usual on these occasions; this also grieved me. To-day, in mercy, the Lord revived me; and at night, in his house of prayer, he made much of his goodness to pass before me. In meditation before the service began he shone upon his work in my soul, led me back to the days of my folly and ignorance, and showed me what he had done for me; gave me to enjoy sweet and clear communion with the Father and Son, and deeply and feelingly convinced me how totally ignorant I was of these great things till he revealed them to me: in short, my God led me into a delightful train of meditation upon his past goodness to me: and gave me also a present possession of himself and his dear Son. Immediately after, heard a profitable sermon on the last verse of the 32d Psalm: "Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, ye righteous: and shout for joy all ye that are upright in heart;" which so corresponded with my meditations, and corroborated the truths and views given me just before, as was most comfortable: I had cause to praise my God. But when shall I love or serve him as I wish?

February 7. Still my Jesus is with me and very precious: he hovers over me with eyes of tenderness and love. Are these expressions improper? Are they enthusiastical? What heart but must flame with love when Jesus fills it with his presence!

"Are passions, then, the pagans of the soul?
Reason alone baptized, alone ordained,
To touch things sacred. O for warmer still!"

I cried to my God to-day to establish me more, and that my communion with him may be more deep and permanent; for as yet I find it admits of small and painful interruptions; I mean, as it respects spiritual joy; and is at times lessened with fears of having grieved his Spirit. It is not easy always to draw the line between temptation and sin. I have entreated he would shine on his work in my soul, and testify clearly, with meridian brightness, what he has done for me; that I may give the glory to him, and take all the comfort he intends I should.

March 11. Still outward and inward trials continue. I prove the body a cumbrous load; it affects my soul in many painful ways. No affliction *for the present* is joyous. What grieves me most is that I do not glorify God more in the fires. Yet he is good, and, at times, gives me a sweet sense of it in prayer, reading the Scriptures, and conversation; and at the name of Jesus still a heaven springs up in my soul. I believe many of my painful sensations are the effects of bodily complaints, and I doubt not many are caused by unfaithfulness. Yet, unprofitable

as I am, the Lord is good, and gives me many precious promises to support and comfort me. Lord, thou art faithful who hast promised, who also will do it. O strengthen my faith, and fill my heart with a greater power of obeying and delighting in thy will. Thou hast graciously said, not one word shall fail of all the good things whereof thou hast spoken. Lord, increase my power of living by faith,—enable me to cleave to Christ. I find the Father and Son, in general, continue clear as the objects of my faith; but of late, the degree of joy resulting from that faith varies much, though hungering and thirsting after all that God is willing to give. Manifold temptations often cause heaviness, and bring such a languor and inexpressible uneasiness upon me as frequently unfits for duty; prevents intenseness of spirit while in it, and often shortens it. May I be taught to improve to the utmost every situation. To-day I have been struggling into God, though with little comfort; till at night, in meditation, God the Father and Son seemed to draw very nigh. I have cause to praise the Lord, who, in spite of the weakness of my body at present, in general gives me sweet access to himself. But in every *duty*, in every *grace*, in every *trial*, I *see* and *feel* such continual shortcomings, and great defects, as are truly painful and mortifying. O to be revived as the corn, to grow as the lily, and to cast forth my roots as Lebanon.

April 7. One of the days of the Son of man. I enjoyed much of the presence of my God, when with his children in the forenoon; and when walking out with some of them, and talking of the things of eternity, the Lord drew sensibly and sweetly nigh, so that my heart was quickly made as the chariots of Amina-dab. Soon after an enemy was at hand, and I felt keen distress, from a fear that I had done wrong. Satan attempted to pour in as a flood, especially when I went to the chapel in the evening. I fled to the blood of Jesus, cleaved to him strongly by faith, and he felt near to help and comfort me. Yet I could not get entirely free from the fear that I had grieved the Spirit of God; this was very bitter. How uninterruptedly sweet would my life be if it were not that these thoughts frequently occur; perhaps from a real cause, for want of a greater degree of watchfulness. At times a word will escape me, that upon strict examination afterward I find did not entirely coincide with the feelings of my heart; then keen anguish ensues; words in common use, but to which little if any meaning is attached. How long is it before we entirely unlearn every improper thing we have learned in a state of nature; and even when we think we have got free of them all, how often, when least expected, do they return.

— 19 (Sunday.) Since my last, my soul has been hungering most vehemently for more holiness. A thousand worlds, had I been possessed of them, seemed nothing to give in exchange, could I have purchased it. My soul felt at times much

discouraged with the thoughts of my poor progress in the ways of God ; but often within these few days in secret prayer, when thus grieved, my Jesus manifested himself sweetly unto me ; shone in all his beauty and goodness, and attracted all the affectionate powers of my soul. With ten thousand times more tenderness and kindness than the dearest earthly friend did he strengthen my hands, comfort my heart, and encourage me to go on. O how does this divine goodness endear him to my soul ! Yet still I languish and pine, because not altogether like him. O for a deeper work of grace ! O for more faithfulness in improving what is already bestowed ! To-day, being the Lord's day, I found it a great cross to be detained from public worship ; but thought it a duty, and proved my God nigh at hand in secret prayer : had there a sweet view of being for ever with the Lord ; and O how delightful was the prospect !

May 30. From various causes my writing has been interrupted for a month. It has been a time of much temptation and trial, in body, mind, and outward situation. O that I could add, in all I have been faithful ! Alas, it is not so. When shall my complaining be at an end ? When shall I love and serve God as I wish, and my communion with him know no interruption ? O that the time would speedily commence. Since my last date I have had precious seasons, times of refreshing, many instances of the goodness of my God in various ways ; but upon the whole I have cause to lament that I have not made that progress I might, neither been so faithful as I ought, especially in the time of trial. *Weakness of nerves and spirits* subjects me to painful feelings. Yet I have felt the interests of Zion dear to me, and a greater spirit of prayer for her prosperity than usual, and the welfare of individuals belonging to her. I have been also stirred up to appear more in public for the cause of religion—I mean by using my influence with others in behalf of the peace of Jerusalem ; and have felt comfort in embracing the opportunities that offered for the spiritual and temporal interests of others. Family and secret prayer has been sweet, and when permitted to hear, the word preached has at times been profitable. Last night I truly proved it so ; my communion was with the Father and the Son, though still not so near as usual. I have had severe bodily illness, and since that there is a degree of languor I have not conquered, and also weakness whereby I am easily affrighted and unhinged. O to be strong in the Lord : O to enjoy all he can bestow, all I can enjoy.

June 7. (Sunday.) Found it good to wait on God in public. This forenoon went to church, through difficulties, but did not repent it ; the Lord was with me, and where Jesus is there is heaven : O to be every moment thus favoured ! Yet I think it is *holiness*, rather than *comfort*, which I pant after. I see the beauty of holiness, how desirable to have the whole image of

God stamped on the soul. This—*this* is the object of my desire, the subject of my prayers, my meditations, my conversation : O how mortifying then do I feel it to have so little of it. O my God, attend unto my prayers, hear my cries, and give me the thing I long for ; give me the mind that was in Christ ; remember thy own word of promise concerning this, upon which thou hast caused me to hope. In the evening, being obliged to be with others, I was grieved to find, upon examination at night, conversation had not been so profitable as it should have been ; my heart was pained : what need for constant watching.

— 21. (Sunday.) This last week, my soul has been longing for more of the divine image, desirous of glorifying God, and being zealous for his interest in the world ; for promoting of which several opportunities have been given me, with power to embrace them, which gave comfort. I have felt Jesus very precious these days past ; at the mention of his name he has frequently and instantly manifested his presence, attended with a joy better felt than expressed. I do taste salvation in his name. O to know him better ; to love him more ; and to feel greater conformity to his image ! I pine for this, and am pained that I do not adorn his gospel more. Upon the whole I do not think my communion with God is so constant as it has been. Holy Father, discover the cause, and remove it ! It has been, for some time past, a season of manifold temptations, which has brought heaviness. My *nerves* and *spirits* have been much affected. The complaints under which I have suffered are great enemies to the *joy* of faith. This day, though unwell in body, I have attended the house of God morning, noon, and night : but found little comfort till the evening, under a sermon from, “Return unto thy rest, O my soul.” Here my Jesus was benignly nigh ; my views of God and his dear Son sweetly clear. This seemed given to prepare for more than one trial, which I soon met with. How good is God !

July 2. Upon the whole, since this day week, the Lord has increased me ; my views of Jesus are brighter, my faith stronger, and attended with more comfort. The grand secret of the Christian life is *living by faith*, ever keeping this divine principle lively, and vigorous, and constantly fixed upon its *capital object*. Without this we draw little supply from Christ ; and since we can do nothing without him, how feeble, how uncertain, how interrupted must be our progress. For some time I have lived more by faith : the actings of it have been vigorous, and my inmost soul has been on the stretch for more holiness. My communion with the Father of mercies has been greater than for some weeks past. My sweetest time for secret prayer is early in the morning. I also often prove the Lord near in social prayer. In the morning, when I first open my eyelids, O how delightful do I feel it to fly by faith to Jesus ! and continually

through the day, not only to attempt a constant living by faith upon him, but also, in every particular thing I do, to look to him for strength and wisdom; and wherever I go, to realize his presence, and repeat my acts of self-dedication to him, opening my heart by faith to receive him afresh: and in all these attempts he is even at my right hand. Yet for closer communion I pine. O when shall my longing desire be satisfied! I still feel it is my delight to act for God, and he gives me many opportunities to encourage me herein. The Lord gave me to know yesterday that he had blessed a conversation I had, some years ago, with one of his own children, to the quickening of her soul, and she has prospered greatly since. O to possess in my own soul all that God is willing to give! Lord, enlarge my borders.

August 5. The more I see and know of the world the less I esteem it, and the more I desire to be delivered from it: to live indifferent to its smiles and frowns. O what vanity and vexation is the portion of those, at least many of them, that enjoy much of what are called its good things. My soul, keep thou free from it! I had an additional conviction of this to-day, by conversing with an aged disciple, much connected with those in high life. In God alone is true happiness to be found. My soul feels drawn out to be much in secret prayer; to have much communion with God; and to be faithful to all about me in every respect. It is a great thing to be altogether a Christian. I pant to be such.

— 31. I have had sweet seasons these two last weeks. The public means have been more than usually blessed to me. Jesus has been very precious to me, and near. I do find, wherever I am, the Lord is with me; agreeable to that gracious promise, long since deeply impressed on my heart, "Have not I commanded thee? be strong and of good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest," Joshua i, 9. Upon strict examination I find the Lord has done more for me than I am always sensible of. Strong temptation sometimes obscures my light and diminishes my joys, and outward trials press upon me; these often cause agitation of spirit and inequality of temper and affection, which, in a degree, unhinge and grieve me. All this may be without sin; yet I ardently long to be freed from it, because it is very possible others may mistake it for sin. *I want a perpetual serenity of mind.* If by this is understood a continual *sameness of feeling*, I fear, before I experience it, mortality must be put off. I want to prove the utmost power of transforming grace, whatever that is. O, my God, satisfy my longing desires! I think I suffer loss, at least in point of enjoyment, by not meditating enough on what God has done for me: an eager desire for what I have not yet obtained carries me away. Lord, do thou *regulate* all my *irregularities*.

“Here all my powers I bring,
Manage all the wheels,
And govern every spring.”

I am still kept hungering after more power to glorify God. Lately he has opened a large field wherein to attempt it, and gives me power to walk in it. May he succeed my humble endeavours. I feel a sweet persuasion that he will.

September 14. The first week of September I enjoyed much of God in public and private, in meditation, conversation, and secret prayer; with many opportunities of doing good, with health of body, and a keen hungering after righteousness. This last week my enjoyment of God has not been so great; at different times my communion has been increased, Jesus has been near and sweet, and my heart has panted after all the life of God: at other times, I have not felt so comfortable; trials have depressed my mind; temptations have distressed me. I have had keen convictions of my shortcomings, with most ardent desires for all the grace I could receive. I am persuaded that I do not pray enough; that I do not watch enough; that I do not sufficiently deny myself: and, for some days past, I have had a conviction that I do not so much as usual realize the presence of God. My spirit, I think, is not enough solemnized, nor my temper so equal as it ought to be. Surely these things are *discovered* that they may be *rectified*. O my God, operate powerfully in me; make me after thine own heart. I desire to be all glorious within, to be all for thee, to give thee each precious moment as it flies.

October 1. This has been, indeed, one of the days of the Son of man. In secret prayer, in the morning, the Lord made much of his goodness to pass before me. How precious did my Jesus feel! How strongly did he draw my heart and affections to himself! This delightful intercourse is better felt than expressed. O that it may prove transforming. In the forenoon I took up my cross, in order to do what appeared my duty, and was for some hours most uncommonly tried; but my communion with the Father and the Son was so constant and sweet, I was carried above all, and was assisted in the midst of these trials, some of them strong, to embrace opportunities that offered for glorifying God. In one point I failed, which grieved me; though not entirely certain that what was asked of me was duty: but O how unspeakably gracious was my God! In my way home, such ineffable sweetness, such heavenly views, filled my soul as I cannot express. I felt as if disunited from all below, and not a cloud interposed for a moment to hide my Lord from my eyes! I could have bid adieu to all below, and gone to be with Christ, which would have been far better. I saw in the forenoon, in the course of the trials I went through, the reason of the uncommon goodness of God in the morning. O how good is he!

November 13. A long interval of a month and three days has intervened since I wrote last, in the course of which I have passed through variegated trials of soul and body; and have much cause to be humbled before God, that when in the furnace I did not glorify him as I ought. I find all past experiences are insufficient in the time of trial, unless the Lord command a blessing with them. I have had a recent proof that no "affliction for the present is joyous, but grievous;" yet there are doubtless many valuable lessons to be learned from it. I have more than ever been taught my own weakness; also, the vanity of all beneath the sun. Much comfort preceded this illness; and, in the beginning of it, Jesus often drew sweetly nigh, which gave comfort; but it was not abiding. In the course of my illness all the powers of hell seemed combined to distress me. So strong was the stream of temptation, that the Lord was a terror to me; his judgments made me afraid. I was driven from prayer: much of my usual relish for divine things forsook me. I felt almost driven to despair. The Lord only knows what I have suffered. O how quickly should I have been consumed by the fire of temptation, had not the Lord said, "Hitherto shalt thou come, and no farther." He also said that he who had showed me great and sore troubles would bring me up again from the depths of the earth, and revive, and quicken me, and comfort me on every side. The former he has done; the latter still remains to be fully accomplished. Since I grew better in body I have been in a state of great weakness, much harassed at times with that fear which hath torment; at other times comforted with the presence of Jesus. But the sinews of my endeavours to do good have felt as if broken asunder through what I have suffered, and the ardour of my soul is damped. Yet surely the word of the Lord must stand. He will accomplish it, and perfect what concerns me. O what a great matter is it to be faithful in the time of sore trial and temptation! My fears have been increased from my views of the state of public affairs; judgments are hanging over us, and few are sensible of it. Within these two days I have begun to be more active for God, and my comfort has been greater, my spirits have been better, and my body stronger: surely I may look for good days yet. O to be more devoted to the will of God! then sufferings would not cut so deep.

— 22. I have been rather languid these nine days past. Still it is a time of trial in various ways. I have not regained what, to my own apprehension, I lost in my last illness. I think my loss has in some measure been owing to a sinking, in a degree, from the life of faith; not cleaving so steadfastly to Christ as I ought in the time of distress, and by judging of my state more by *feelings* than by *faith*. The Lord is increasing my desire to do good, and enabling me to embrace the opportunities offered; but still my comfort is less; I do not feel so much com-

munion with God, neither such a constant power to realize his presence, neither such delight in him: still a degree of fear remains. My hopes have, as yet, been disappointed, as it respects the fruits of my last illness.

December 1. Was both profited and most severely tried to-day. The fear of losing a valuable parent was deeply afflicting. I fear what I felt was not fully consistent with resignation to the will of God: nature was overcome. I know that "unreproved she may drop a tear:" but I felt too keenly. I was enabled to cry unto the Lord, and he helped me. For the present he has in a measure removed my fears, and filled me with gratitude, but my will must flow more deeply with the divine will.

— 26. I have been oppressed these last three days, yet no trials seem to discourage me from attempting to do good to others as opportunities offer. But I lament I do not obtain greater victories over my enemies, and make greater progress in the divine life. Years pass quickly on; but alas! how little improved. This thought cuts deep upon a mind desirous of being all light, all life, all love. Yet, in a small measure, I do daily converse with God by faith and prayer, and daily see Jesus as the King in his beauty. While I now write, I feel him precious, and see him clearly. O to be more like him!

CHAPTER XIV.—1779.

Diary continued.

January 1. The Lord has brought me to see another year. If spared, may I glorify him more than ever, by being more faithful, more fruitful, and more active in his cause: this is the ardent desire of my soul. On a review of the last year, I have cause to say my God has been truly good: the consolations of his Spirit have neither been few nor small. He hath visited his unprofitable servant with many refreshing seasons, and often delivered from bodily affliction; given me many precious promises, and numberless opportunities to promote his glory, by attempting to be useful to the bodies and souls of my fellow creatures. In all I have come short. I can scarcely perceive that I have made any progress heavenward. When shall my complainings cease! O to be as holy and happy as my God waits to make me! Through the course of the year, I think I have in general found more profit in reading the Scriptures, more comfort in secret prayer, especially early in the morning; and also more power and courage to act for God in a public way. He has discovered some new methods for this which he had not before shown me. May the success of my attempts prove that they were from himself, and may he daily enlarge my

sphere of usefulness. For these last three months, I think I have enjoyed a greater degree of establishment in his ways; yet, excepting some precious visits, without much additional comfort. I have also had, during that period, much perplexity about the true state of my soul; but whether this uncertainty arises from any loss of grace, or is the result of carnal reasoning, I am at present unable to determine. Shine, Lord, upon thy work: give the witness and the fruit of the Spirit in a much larger measure, that in thy light I may see light.

— 7. A happy day. Jesus was precious to my soul this forenoon when from home. I felt a heavenly serenity shed through my soul; enjoyed clear and distinct actings of faith upon God and Christ, with a power to realize their sacred presence. Repeated acts of self-dedication produced confidence and comfort; but I neglected some opportunities of doing good. O how unprofitable! The Lord, in great mercy and kindness, condescends to encourage me to go on in his ways: he enables me to rely on his word of promise; and I believe he will, in me, “fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power,” 2 Thess. i, 2. This is what I want. Be it, Lord, as thou hast spoken: hasten thy work, that I may glorify thee.

— 21. For some days I have been the subject of severe bodily affliction, but have enjoyed much comfort in my mind. The Lord has dealt tenderly with me. In general my views of God and Christ have not only been clear, but productive of more deep and steady comfort. Within the last eight days I have been obliged to be much with others; yet, so gracious has the Lord been, that I have been permitted to enjoy delightful fellowship with the Father of my spirit, and with the adorable Redeemer of my soul. O to enjoy this, and all its blessed effects, to the utmost possible extent! Though thus comforted, temptations of various kinds, and some of them very painful, have attacked me; and still I mourn that my conformity to the divine image is so small and defective. I fear, while I remain in the body I shall not cease complaining. At present I suffer from a too great inequality of spirit. I am too easily moved. The reverse of this, at least in a degree, I believe to be my happy privilege. How far a constitution naturally weak, rendered so by various causes, may prevent all I desire, is a question I cannot easily solve; or how far these variations may exist without any mixture of sin, I am also at a loss fully to determine. May He that knoweth all things give me to know, and also to prove, the utmost efficacy of divine grace. At present, I feel weak in body, weak in mind, and unable to spend much time at once in any duty; yet I am comfortable. I am very desirous to be faithful to those around me, both by precept and practice; but am sadly defective.

February 22. Since my last date I have felt, at times, most ardent desires for more devotedness of heart and life to God. I fear self-indulgence, and am on the watch against it; yet, from constant weakness and frequent indisposition, I am, I know, in danger of it. But the Lord hath said, "No weapon formed against thee shall prosper." I also fear that worldly cares occupy too many of my thoughts, and hurt my soul. Lord, help me to cast my every care on thee. My conversation in my family is not so spiritual as it ought to be. I determine to improve in this. This night, when reflecting on past experiences, I was sensible of a growth in grace. My views of God and Christ are more clear, my peace more constant, my power to act for God greater, but I still live below my privileges. I fear I am not improving, to the utmost, my present situation. It has long been a time of great temptation. O that it may prove a purifying furnace.

— 25. Was often this morning and forenoon at a throne of grace, yet could not obtain that intensity of mind and heart I desired. O what is man! Without continued aid from on high he is all weakness, unfaithfulness, unprofitableness. How great the long suffering of God that bears so long with him! When visiting the sick to-day, found my views of God the Father and Son clear, and my meditations sweet; all nature seemed to wear a smile: indeed, the beauties of nature ever tend to elevate my mind, and thus carry it up to its great Author. O to be more spiritual! I found to-day, by attempting to communicate happiness to others, I secured happiness to myself. Surely our Lord's words are strictly and literally true, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." But in all I say, or do, or think, I fail. Holy Jesus, I fly to thy atoning blood for pardon, and to the blessed Spirit to sanctify me. Make me as the king's daughter, all glorious within.

— 27. O how gracious was my God to-day! He gave me a delightful prospect of eternity, clear and bright views of himself and of his dear Son, and a sweet persuasion of being for ever with him. I cannot easily express what were my feelings on the occasion, but truly my meditations were very heavenly. What a soul-satisfying portion do I find my God and Saviour! How infinitely superior to all the world has to offer! I rejoiced in my heavenly inheritance. This was late at night, and I regretted that sleep should interrupt my enjoyment. But a little while, and I shall get rid of mortality. No night shall then intervene; *there* shall be one eternal day to sing the praises of my God and King; and I shall do this without weariness and without fainting. What is man, O Lord, that thou shouldst thus provide for him? Amazing love! "God only knows the love of God." It is far above our feeble comprehension.

— 29 Was enabled to rise earlier this morning than

usual, and in various ways my trust was in God. In the forenoon went to church, and heard with sweet composure; was preserved from wanderings, and enabled to realize the presence of my God and Saviour, and to attend to his word more closely than usual. On coming home was in a comfortable frame, and was desirous to return thanks to the Lord for his goodness. As I was entering my closet, the following words came powerfully to my mind: "The Lord is good; a strong hold in the day of trouble, and he knoweth them that trust in him." This made me fear trouble was at hand, especially when I considered what I enjoyed last night; and, as usual, it damped my comfort. I prayed to the Lord, that if this was from an enemy he would remove it; but, if from himself, he would enable me to profit by this kind and seasonable warning. Lord, fit me for whatever thou hast prepared for me, and be thou glorified in me. I would give myself to thee, all I have and am.

March 9. My fears, expressed on the 29th of last month, were well founded. Since then I have been severely and unexpectedly tried; but my God has been good, supported me, and brought me through. From *weakness of spirit and nerves* the animal frame was more agitated than was needful; but I hope this may be without sin. My severe distresses in early life, with a firm belief of the Christian religion, which quickly followed, and a comfortable persuasion of my interest in the glad tidings of the gospel, produced a serenity and solemnity of mind, with a sobriety of manners, which have more or less abode with me ever since; but lately, from weakness of body, I am sooner agitated than formerly. This, at times, grieves me, especially as those who may perceive it may suppose that it flows from a different cause. Do thou, O Lord, strengthen me with strength, both in the inward and outward man, that I may not only *appear*, but *really be*, always calm and religiously collected. Teach me, heavenly Father, ever to maintain the *dignity*, the *purity*, the *sanctity*, of the Christian character: aided by thy blessed Spirit may I daily add to my "faith, courage; and to courage, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity," 2 Pet. i, 5-7. The Lord has enabled me lately to see more fully the vanity of the world, and the emptiness of the creature; and though nature is pained by the discovery, grace enables me to bless the Lord for the useful lesson. It increases my desire to know more of God, and to derive all my happiness from him, who is a fountain ever flowing, and ever full.

It has also been much impressed upon my heart lately, to be grateful to the Lord for his merciful interposition in behalf of this nation, in not permitting the popish bill to pass, as it relates to Scotland. * May his unmerited goodness produce a proper

effect on the minds of his people. How inexcusable must we be if we continue regardless of our own best interests and of his glory. His hand has long been lifted up against England, Ireland, and America, but as yet we will not see. In the present case, with regard to Scotland, how mercifully has the stroke been averted! Had the penal statutes which are in force against the papists been repealed, and the encouragement intended by the bill given them, in all human probability, the Protestant cause would have been brought low, and how fearful must have been the consequences! But our God is merciful to an ungrateful, insensible people. O that we were wise, that we would consider these things, and act accordingly.

— 13. Another day is past, and I am so much nearer eternity. O that I could say I had got nearer to my God! I have felt a greater standing alone with God; a willingness to seek and find *all* my happiness in him. I have felt disposed, if called, to give up the creature, even Christians hitherto much valued. I have also experienced an increase of desire to live only to God; to fill up all my time with and for him, and felt sweetly animated to embrace every opportunity that offered for doing good. Spent much time in Christian conversation; found reading profitable, and looking to Jesus sweet. My soul felt drawn out with strong desire to adorn the gospel; to be not only blameless but exemplary. Lord, make me so.

April 11. (Sunday.) Jesus appeared lovely to the eye of faith this morning, though the emanations of his love were but faint. Being detained at home in the forenoon, I wished much to improve time in secret with God. I felt groaning for more liberty, had more power to plead in prayer, and more composure than usual. I endeavoured to lay all my wants, my desires, my hopes, and fears, before the Lord; and plead his promises for sanctification, which are many and extensive; but I want more fervour. I attempted to search into the state of my soul, and to detect the causes of my want of prosperity, at least in the degree I want it. I seemed to see many, yet could appeal to the Lord that I wished them all removed. It has for some time been a season of trial, and from various quarters. I have been more than ever called upon to live by faith, in opposition to the aspect of Providence and the evidence of my own feelings, which are often painful. My comfort flows purely from looking to Jesus, believing in him, and from feeling my soul united to him. I scarcely find any thing in myself to rejoice in. Whether this is owing to the work of grace not going on in my soul so well as formerly, or from my being more delivered from self-confidence and self-complacency, I cannot determine. Blessed God, do thou discover it.

— 25. In the intervals of public worship to-day I had sweet meditations alone. I have reason to think that I grieve

the Spirit of God, by not being always sensible of, and grateful for, what the Lord has done for me; and this through an ardent desire of more grace. My views of sanctification are so high, so extensive, that I sometimes think I am scarcely at the threshold of a religious life: I conclude every one has more grace than myself; and feel ashamed to speak of my experience, my attainments are so small. Yet, through the great goodness of my Lord, at other times I am constrained to declare what he has done for me, and if my heart does not deceive me, I simply speak what I feel.

May 25. Various have been my hinderances since my last date. Through necessary intercourse with others my time in secret has been frequently shortened, and my power of realizing the presence of my God and Saviour not so constant; this created fears that my soul was not so much alive as usual. The fear of death has been more prevalent than for some time; and for a moment, at different seasons, the fear of God's displeasure has given me great anguish. Satan has had recourse to various stratagems to distress my mind; while my addresses to a throne of grace have not been so fervent as formerly, nor my power to abide in prayer so great. Within these few days the Lord has tried me in a tender point, and I am not certain but that nature felt more than is consistent with entire resignation. Lord, search and try me, and let no foe prevail. Let my will ever sweetly flow with thine, as soon as discovered. While I mention my fears and distresses I would not omit mentioning the goodness of my God, who has frequently given me delightful seasons, in secret and social prayer, in intercourse with his children, in his house of prayer, and at his table.

June 5. I find Satan is a great enemy to the use of the pen, especially in this way, and I am not always aware of the temptation. Since my last date I am sensibly strengthened, both in body and mind. I have obtained greater victories over nature than for many months past; and have also found the word preached more profitable. Upon the whole, my soul is animated to run with greater alacrity in the good ways of God. The passion of fear has not been so predominant. I have enjoyed rather more comfort, with a greater equality of spirit, temper, and affection. With desire I have been led to embrace the opportunities that offered in which to do good, but still I am painfully short of my privileges. When shall I be all I wish.

— 18. I enjoy greater nearness to God, more sensible comfort, and a considerable increase of hungering and thirsting after righteousness. The word preached has been more profitable, especially a sermon on, "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." Here I found food peculiarly suited to my spiritual taste, and heard my own state exactly described: it was indeed a precious time. I have

also found social prayer and conversation with Christians much blessed, but I have had likewise much bodily pain. This, with me at least, generally lessens *joy*, but *love* and *resignation* may be always the same. I perceive I am but a babe in sanctification. O to experience the strength and stability of a father in Christ. Nothing short of a plenitude of gospel grace can satisfy me,—a full and constant enjoyment of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

July 10. I am almost at a loss to express with any degree of precision what has been the state of my mind for several days. I think I have not been so much alive either to pain or pleasure in the divine life as I ought to be. Outward trials press hard upon me, and, I fear, occupy too much of my attention : Satan, I find, labours hard to keep me dwelling upon things without, well knowing, if he can carry this point, he will effectually diminish my comfort, and add to the weight of trial. I am in some measure aware of this device, but not enough so ; for I find the more I am alone with God in meditation and self-examination, the more clearly I see solid ground for rejoicing, even in the midst of many outward and inward trials which cause heaviness. I fear sinking from God, losing any thing I have gained : I dread a *Laodicean spirit*, and grieve that I have so little of the fruits of righteousness—that I bring so little glory to God. At the same time, I am out of the world in heart and affection, and draw no comfort from its follies and vanities, or even from those enjoyments which many sensible people suppose essential to happiness. My spirit is so moulded that out of God I can enjoy nothing. My views of God and his beloved Son are clear, but they seem like objects discerned by moonlight ; there is not that warmth resulting from the sight that I am accustomed to feel. To-day, in the view of sitting down at the table of the Lord to-morrow, my heart is lamenting my comparative distance from the centre of happiness ; struggling into him, and sweetly drawn by a powerful magnetic virtue ; but still I feel afar off. O to get near, and to keep there in constant fellowship.

— 23. Still it is a season of variegated trial from almost every quarter. Lately the fiery darts of Satan have been keenly pointed, and seemed to pierce to my inmost soul. At times the Lord gives comfort, shines clearly into my mind, and all my distress appears to vanish :—the sky is unclouded, and I feel the powerful influence of divine love ; but this pleasing change is of short duration, a painful transition soon ensues ; the clouds gather blackness, and my enemies renew their attack with redoubled violence. Yet my views of God and Christ are not obscured, neither the relation I stand in to both unperceived ; but, from the cruel power of temptation and weakness, little comfort is derived from it. Jesus hath appeared, and applied that precious promise, “ Ye now have sorrow, but I will see you again, and your heart

shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you." I would gladly infer from this that great and good things still await me, when these days of sorrow shall have passed away. Hasten their departure, holy Father, and till then grant that I may be properly exercised, that I may afterward find the peaceable fruits of righteousness.

August 2. For the last eight days the storm of temptation has in a measure subsided, and Christ has felt very nigh and precious, clear to the eye of faith. I have also enjoyed more comfort in family devotion, and in secret prayer early in the morning. I have now for some months been deeply convinced of my poverty; may I thereby be taught to live more than ever by simple faith in Jesus, and then I know he will supply my every need. My heart is pained within me because I am at too great a distance from God: all is either an aching void or severe temptation, and yet I do not obtain that fervour of spirit I wish. I want to cry mightily to God, and to take no rest till he bring me out of trouble. I sometimes fear that I have grieved the Holy Spirit; and when I make a narrow scrutiny, several things appear that I think, perhaps, are displeasing to him; but yet I am not certain. In the time of severe trial we see things often through a false medium, and I frequently am at a loss on this account. The light of strong faith only can remove suspicions, scatter clouds, and give certainty in doubtful and perplexing cases. In whatever state I am, opportunities for usefulness are eagerly embraced, though sometimes not attended with much comfort to myself. Lately fears of death have passed through my mind, and cut keenly as they darted along. The Lord seldom permits them to stay long, but enables me to fly from these unbelieving thoughts, and to give them up to himself. Were I in the smallest degree to give way to them, they would make dreadful havoc in my soul. The keenest distress I feel at present is a degree of uncertainty respecting the will of God concerning me, both as it regards soul, body, and outward estate. It appears to me as if the Lord intended to make some change; and that, by late and present dispensations, he is seeking to wean me from the persons, places, and things that at present surround me: *this* I leave to him, and only desire a sanctified use of all; that in all things I may be enabled to give up my own will to him. Could I but glorify him as I desire, O how would this sweeten every cup.

— 20. A few days after my last date, I was by my divine monitor warned of approaching trials, and found these words impressed upon my mind: "Keep yourself in the love of God." Soon after this my spiritual joy gradually abated, and trials increased till they seemed to compass me about; to my own apprehension I had daily less power to resist or overcome them. This has been my state for two weeks, and still so continues.

At times Jesus draws nigh and smiles upon me; but he visits only as a transient guest. Though I endeavoured to rely on the promises of a faithful God, my faith in them is not so strong as to prevent all fear when the aspect of providence appears gloomy or discouraging. Yet, after all I have said, when I sit down to examine the state of my soul, I feel I have communion with the Father and the Son. By faith I see both clearly, but, through the abundance of outward trials and inward conflicts, I reap but little sensible comfort from it. So true is it, that, both in things spiritual and natural, it is not so much what we possess, as that *enjoyment of it* which God only can give, that makes us happy. There seems to be a particular language in his dispensations of providence and grace toward me for some time past, which I do not fully understand. My way seems hid, my path intricate: I see not in several cases what is the Lord's will concerning me, and this certainty greatly adds to my distress.

September 2. Two weeks more of my time is elapsed, in more distress of mind, and anguish of spirit, and affliction of body, than I can easily express. Surely, Lord, thou dost all things well, whatever I feel, whatever I suffer. Day after day I have looked for the turning of my captivity, but in vain: I have thought of the promises of a faithful God, and attempted to comfort myself by trusting in them:—I have remembered the days that are past, when I had constant communion with the Father and the Son, and walked under the influence of the Holy Spirit: but all this only served to show, in more striking colours, the sad reverse which I now experience. Yet God is faithful, his promises cannot fail, and I will trust in him.

— 10. Since my last date the Lord has been carrying on his work in my soul by severe outward trials, strong spiritual temptations, and deep consolation. The fiery darts of Satan have been keenly pointed, and pierced my inmost soul; at the same time, I have enjoyed a more delightful intercourse with God, even when engaged in the necessary duties of life, than for some months past. I have been made to see the King in his beauty, and the land that is afar off. In reading the Scriptures, in family and secret prayer, I have found God at my right hand, and Jesus has been to me a friend sticking closer than a brother; but still I look for greater things than these.

— 29. A precious day, especially in conversing with the people of God. O how delightful did I find Jesus to my soul while speaking of his goodness to me; the place seemed filled with his presence. In secret prayer, also, the Beloved of my soul condescended to visit me with the rich communications of his love, and by his presence made my closet a delightful paradise. I felt surrounded with the Lord:—heaven sprung up in my soul. O could I be thus ever near to the source of bliss! I regretted that the weakness of my body should demand rest.

Hail, happy eternity, when I shall serve my God day and night, without losing a single moment. Till then, indulgent Father, strengthen me in body and mind, and cause me daily to increase in love to thee, and in communion with thee.

November 4. My experience proves that silence of spirit, and a constant keeping of the heart with all diligence, tend greatly to promote communion with God. Let God invariably be the object of our supreme affection, and we shall find this keeping of the heart easy and delightful. It costs us no trouble to think or speak of those whom we love. The Lord has been teaching me some important lessons this week, and he made me truly willing to learn them. One respects self-examination. I perceive that when I desire to know the true state of my soul, and for that reason attempt to look narrowly into my heart, I should begin by acting faith upon Christ, and upon the promises made to believers through him, in whom they are all "yea and amen." This instantly brings strength and comfort, more or less, into the mind, and thereby greatly facilitates the important work of self-examination; it clears our views, and enables us to see light in God's light. Formerly, when attempting to try my state, if, on looking into my heart, I did not feel strong love and faith, I was discouraged; and thereby gave the enemy an advantage over me, and unfitted myself for the work in which I was engaged. May my God teach me wisdom in all things, bless me with a teachable disposition, a quick apprehension, and a power to retain for my own profit every lesson thus taught:—I wish also to be qualified to instruct others; for as I freely receive I would freely give.

— 13. Much hindered from my usual retirement through intercourse with Christians, but endeavoured to make it profitable, and found social prayer delightful. The Lord still leads me forward in different paths of usefulness, and powerfully inclines my heart to employ every talent to his glory. Through mercy, I feel more rooted and grounded in the ways of God, and possess more power to confess him before the world. The Lord still gives me proof after proof of the emptiness of creature enjoyment: and of the fulness, reality, and happiness of the things of eternity; he gives me also to *feel this*, thereby not only enlightening my understanding and convincing my judgment, but also persuading and inclining my will to pursue spiritual and eternal objects.

— 23. For some days I have experienced that "God is love." I think he is deepening my communion with himself, showing me how much nearer I may come to him, and pointing it out in different ways so clearly as to make me astonished at my own blindness, that would not permit me to see it sooner. I cannot express how precious I have found Jesus for a few of the last days; he hath permitted me to converse with him as a man

with his friend, to see him clearly by faith, and to enjoy sweet union and communion with him. My life is now one continued resting on him.

December 2. "God is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble, and he knoweth them that trust in him." I have been afflicted, but it hath been a gentle visitation, and not attended with that languor I generally feel on these occasions. My God has given me to know him, as a God that heareth prayer. I have been convinced of the great privilege of drawing nigh to a throne of grace, and desired to improve it. I have found it sweet to give God my last thoughts at night; in the morning, also, when I awake, O how delightful to find my heart and affections flowing spontaneously to my Lord, while he condescends to manifest his presence. Still my God enables me to act for him with comfort and steadiness; and gives me to enjoy him in conversation, meditation, reading, singing his praise, &c. O to be all that God would have me.

— 20. My spiritual life is sensibly increased, I feel powerfully drawn to a throne of grace, and am constrained to abide there. While writing to a Christian friend, Jesus was benignly nigh: his name was as ointment poured forth, and my soul clave to him. O to enjoy those unsearchable riches that are in him. Some days last week I was uncommonly tempted, and felt very weak; my soul shudders at what I then felt and feared. In spite of all the Lord hath done for me, how soon should I fail, if not continually upheld by Omnipotence. Blessed be my God, who does not permit these dreadful feelings to continue long. Holy Father, deliver me from them, that I may serve thee in righteousness and true holiness, without fear, all the days of my life. O when shall I be all I desire; I would be all love, all praise, all meekness,—in short, I would be a *living image* of that God I serve. I would prove, to the utmost power of sovereign grace, all that elevation of mind, all that dignity of sentiment, all that purity of heart, all that sanctity of manners, which true religion inspires. Come, O my God, impart thyself more fully, and enable me to love and serve thee with all the *strength* and *perfection* that the *imperfection* of humanity will admit.

CHAPTER XV.—1780.

Lady Maxwell's correspondence with Lady Henrietta Hope.

IN tracing the Christian course of this eminently pious lady, we have hitherto derived our information principally from her Diary. After this period, many of her valuable letters, written to a few pious friends, have been preserved; and we shall now

gladly avail ourselves of this auxiliary aid. From her Diary, we have already learned how she communed with God and her own heart : we have seen her steadily advance in fervent piety to God, and in extensive and unwearied benevolence to man. Her epistolary correspondence will still, in a measure, pursue the same delightful themes ; but it will also enlarge the field of observation, and give a prominence to different traits in her ladyship's character, which cannot fail to excite admiration. We shall thus behold her, in the relation of a *spiritual* parent, sympathizing in the afflictions of her amiable and pious *daughter* ; and with uncommon tenderness and fidelity, striving to pour into her bosom the balm of consolation. We shall see her exemplifying a friendship founded in religious principle, and invigorated and regulated by the spirit of Christianity. And, while she cannot but charm by her delightful familiarity of manner and simplicity of style, she will continue to administer instruction on a variety of interesting points, both of religious experience and religious practice.

Lady Henrietta Hope is already known to the reader ; and the other correspondents of Lady Maxwell shall be afterward noticed.

TO THE RIGHT HON. LADY HENRIETTA HOPE.

January 14, 1780.

Does my *dear daughter* suppose I want compliments or protestations ! Indeed I do not. With regard to her, and my intercourse with her, my eye is single, and my intention pure : I wish the prosperity of her soul, and the return which would give me most satisfaction would be, to know that my feeble attempts to promote it were not in vain.

If I could, I would remove your every spiritual malady ; how much more willing must your God be to make you *all* He would have you to be ! I believe you would willingly submit to all your present painful sensations, did you believe you were just in the way the Lord would have you. Your distress, I know, is heightened by uneasy fears that your want of prosperity is, partly at least, in yourself. Could I point it out, I honestly would, whatever pain you might feel from the discovery. As far as I know I think you have a tender conscience, and you shun doing violence to it : but I am not certain that you have not what is termed a doubting conscience, and this of itself is a source of much distress that the Lord does not mean we should feel : but till I know it is so, I will not say any more about it. I think you desire and attempt, as far as you know it, to do and suffer *all* the will of God. I believe you have no confidence in the flesh ; that you endeavour daily to take up your cross, and deny yourself ; if so, why do not you enjoy more comfort ? Nay,

why do you not "rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and in every thing give thanks?" Were I to say what appears to me to prevent it, I would tell you: You do not keep your privileges in view; of course, you do not live up to them. You live more by *sense* than by *faith*. When you examine your own state, your conclusions concerning it are too much influenced by evil reasoning. You seek holiness, I fear, as it were, by the works of the law, rather than by simple faith. You dwell too much upon your *wants*; you are not enough thankful for what the Lord has *already* done for you. The haste of unbelief is not enough subdued; a degree of murmuring at times takes place (than which nothing makes greater havoc in the soul) when tempted from various causes to fretfulness. Though you do not give way to it, yet you do not strive enough against it: you rather sink down into a state of despondency and supineness of spirit. These, I think, are some of your hinderances, which, together with a weak and sickly body and a variety of trials, bring you into heaviness, and press down your soul; but be of good courage, all shall yet be well. I think you suffer loss also from want of intercourse with lively Christians; and I believe not a small degree of your distress is of that kind which proceeds not so much from weakness of faith as from *scrupulousness of conscience*; yet even *this* is highly useful in its season. But I apprehend this distress will pass away when you obtain more faith and love; when you are more rooted and grounded in the love of God. There are different stages, you know, in the Christian life:—the young men are stronger than the babes; the fathers are stronger than the young men. When you enjoy the stability of this *matured state* you will then be better enabled to "keep yourself in the love of God," and to overcome the wicked one. O that you may quickly experience this!

I hope the Lord means to give you your sister's soul, whatever may be the issue of her disorder. She is laid upon my mind in prayer, and also my dear daughter, more than ever. Be not too much distressed about not being able to abide in prayer, on your knees; give it up to the Lord: he can soon remove it, or overrule it for good, if he permit it to remain. By being so much above stairs you will have fewer things to distress you, and less fatigue of body, and, I dare say, prevent colds. May you be enabled to improve your situation to the utmost.

Miss N. has given a very favourable account of me, I see, but no doubt I have reason to admire the goodness of my God for the health he has given me this severe winter. He knows I desire to use that, and all he bestows on me, for his glory. Had I a thousand lives, I would devote them to Him who has given his *only Son* for me, and permits me to feel the sweet attraction of his love very strongly. He is, indeed, the spring of all my joys, and comfort of my brightest days. I dwell continually under

the covert of his wings, and find it all my plea for every blessing I stand in need of. I am still far behind, but through mercy kept hungering and thirsting after all the purchase of his cross. Be encouraged, my dear madam, to fight for the prize, O how animating the prospect of dwelling for ever with the Lord, and even *here* enjoying all that he has dearly bought, and is freely bestowing on his people! And this belongs to you. What should discourage you? and why with vexing thoughts should you disquiet yourself? Will you read and pray over the 17th and following verses of the 1st chapter of the Ephesians; also, from the 10th to the 18th verse of the last chapter of ditto? I think you will find benefit from these scriptures. Be thankful that you obtain comfort in reading the Bible. There are wise reasons for the Lord's varying the means he blesses to us; one is, that we may idolize none of them, that we may prize them all, not knowing which may have the commission to do us good. Now, my dear daughter, I commit you to *Him* who "carries the lambs in his bosom, and gently leads those that are with young." Your affectionate parent in Him, D. M.

TO LADY H. HOPE.

January 25, 1780.

I regret my dear daughter's illness the more, from a fear that she may not have all that attention which is needful as matters now stand. But I trust the Lord will make up every want, and with his love sweeten every dispensation. May you feel him ever nigh! I think if you would live more by faith, you would enjoy more comfort. *Insisting* upon the *direct* act of faith, especially when barren, dry, and tempted, is often of great use; it strengthens the mind, increases confidence in a pardoning God, and frequently brings comfort, by breaking the power of temptation: but this is a lesson the Lord himself alone can enable us to learn practically, for it is acting contrary to our feelings, our fears, the suggestions of Satan, and the reasonings of unbelief. The Lord has already done much for you, and will perfect what concerns you.

In order to our spiritual prosperity, it is of great consequence not only to obtain, but to *keep*, a clear view of our privileges as Christians; and to fix it in our minds that, as all these blessings are purchased for us by Christ, the Lord intends that we should enjoy them, and is pleased when we plead for them, and are importunate. He delights in the prosperity of his people. May he soon give you to experience the fulness of gospel promises, that you may "rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and in every thing give thanks." You know what satisfaction this would give to your parent.

Through the goodness of my God, my health is much better than usual, and my mother and sister are very tolerable. Lady G. was with me on Saturday: looked well, and was in good health and spirits. The disagreeable affair of our being examined on oath about Miss D——'s money is to happen very soon. May the Lord give clearness of thought, power of expression, and firmness of mind. Some of the lawyers have objected to admitting Lady G. or me as witnesses, as they believe we are as mad as Miss D. I do not expect we shall be able, by our evidence, to convince them that we are *not mad*; but we should wish to acquit ourselves in a rational manner.

Your affectionate parent,

D. M.

TO LADY H. HOPE.

Edinburgh, Feb. 7, 1780. Wednesday morning.

I intended writing a few lines to my dear daughter on Monday, but was prevented by being obliged to "entertain strangers" the whole day; particulars about *whom* I will communicate when I obtain as much leisure as is necessary to explain matters. Yesterday I was rather unwell, and was obliged to have company both to *dinner* and *supper*. The latter I shun as much as possible; but I find there is no general rule but what must occasionally admit of an exception. In *all* my God is good, and is indeed a strong hold in the day of trial and difficulty. He strengthens me with strength in the inner man; and when uncommon exertions are needful, either as head of a family or as a Christian, "he giveth power to the faint, and increases strength to them that have no might." "Who is a God like unto him!" His *faithfulness* is a *shield* and *buckler* unto me; because he hath caused me to set my love upon him, therefore he sets me up on high. "O to grace how great a debtor!" May my life praise him! and may you have more cause than ever to adore his goodness. O trust in him with all your heart, and "he will be as a place of broad rivers unto you," wide and deep.

But I must not forget what you noticed in your last letter. Great attention is to be paid, not only to the *commands* but even to the *inclinations* of a parent. I see many inconveniences attending either your having a maid or wanting one; but if the particulars you are to mention to Lord H—n do not give him a different view of the matter, I fancy you will see it as a duty to do what will make him easy, and at the same time to do it in the way that will give you least trouble. But here I am interrupted, and must conclude. The Lord be your teacher in all things, and encompass you about with his favour as with a shield.

Your affectionate parent in the Lord,

D. M.

TO LADY H. HOPE.

February 26, 1780.

I take the first opportunity, after my fatigue of body and mind is over, to thank my dear daughter for so kindly interesting herself in what concerned her parent. It is now over, the new-married couple left me yesterday forenoon, intending to reach Greenlaw at night, Newcastle this night; and Mr. C. promised he would not travel on Sunday, though greatly hurried, but would go decently to church. This was a piece of work in which I little expected to be employed; but I really think the Lord put it into my hand, and stirred me up to a most vigorous exertion of body and mind, and gave me a wonderful measure of health. The part I was to take in it was clearly set before me; and it appeared to me that religion would suffer, I mean be unjustly blamed, if I refused to act; so that what I did, I did for the Lord's sake and for religion's sake, as well as for the convenience of my relations.

The Lord saw meet to give me favour in Mr. C.'s eyes, so that what I said or did was approved. He was anxious to gain my approbation. From a little conversation with him I clearly saw the way that was most likely to gain upon him, (I mean in order to do good to his soul,) and I took my measures accordingly, which succeeded: so that I saw the effects of it before he left me; he welcomed all I said upon religion. The night before his marriage I wrote him in a polite and kind way, saying what I thought was proper on the occasion, and asked his acceptance, for a place in his library, of Mr. Robert Walker's Sermons, elegantly bound; and, when time and circumstances would permit, begged a serious perusal of them. You would have been pleased with his answer.

I cannot easily express what I feel for your kind attention in sending the Bible. I will give particulars after. Do, my dear daughter, take your own prudent way to let poor Lady Ann know her danger. There is, I fear, no time to lose; I do not forget her, and you are ever on my mind. May all concerned be comforted, and obtain the sanctified use of what I fear will soon happen. O that you may be upheld! Goodness and mercy will follow *you all* the days of your life, and you will, I believe, dwell *for ever* with the Lord. Bear, then, with meekness and sweetness, the trials of life. I never *entertained a thought* of giving you up: I only regret that I do not do you more good. The Lord will, perhaps, make me more successful for the time to come. If wishes and prayers would do, your soul would grow as a cedar in Lebanon. Might I offer my best wishes to Lady Ann, though unknown? Tell her I hope much good is intended her by her illness; that the Lord means to wean her from the

world, and to give her more substantial blessings ; that I wish her to enjoy the love of the Redeemer, through faith in him, which will sweeten all her affliction, and carry her above it with a holy fortitude.

To be ready for the footman, I am writing in a great hurry, and forgetting many words. Peace be with you.

Ever your affectionate parent,

D. M.

TO LADY H. HOPE.

Monday, March 13, 1780.

My dear daughter's letter I intended to have answered on Saturday, but was prevented. I asked Mr. W. for the sermon you mentioned, and he seemed very willing to let me have it, but was afraid he could only give me the heads, as it was not written, and Miss G. he believed did not hear it.

I think the Lord will make up the loss you will sustain by your absence on this solemn and sweet occasion. Dr. S. came in on Saturday, when I was at Lady L.'s ; I see his hopes are small of Lady Ann. May the Lord enable you to act toward her so as to cut off all future reflections, and greatly bless your attempts for her soul's good. Poor Lady G. is not well. She wrote me on Thursday that she was in much trouble and perplexity, and begged an interest in my prayers ; to which I returned as kind a note as I could, and requested she would let me know, if she had the least desire to see me. She has been worse since ; but to-day the return of the message is, that she is rather better. I intend to call before I seal this. I fear she is meeting with some new trouble about her affair. May the Lord direct and guide her ! She has my prayers and sympathy.

May he shine upon your soul, and give you to experience the *stability* and *maturity* of a father in Christ. It is your privilege to grow in grace ; and, though some situations may appear more favourable than others for this growth, yet we may be morally certain that, in every lawful situation, whatever its hinderances, or how many soever its difficulties, the grace of God is sufficient to enable us to gain all these heights and depths of conformity to the divine image it is his will we should attain. This is a comfortable thought. But we may go still farther, and rest satisfied that our *present* situation is what *He* that cannot err sees best calculated for our spiritual prosperity. This does not imply that we are never to make the least alteration in it. No : a good man's ways are ordered by the Lord ; and he appoints sometimes a variety of changes for him in the course of his life, and what he appoints he means for our good. You seem particularly called to live by faith. This is a difficult life, but it brings, perhaps, more glory to God than if you walked always in

the broad light of his countenance. Living in *his will* is the great point, whether we have much or little comfort.

I am pleased with what you write me of Lady H. I still hope that things will terminate well there. May you be faithful. Lady L. D.'s death was truly affecting.

"So pass the shadowy scenes of life away."

All flesh is grass, but how permanent are the blessings which Christ has purchased for his people! How durable his love! How sweet! O what a soul-satisfying portion is he! All *fulness* dwells in him. May you richly prove this. Ever believe me, my dear daughter,

Your affectionate parent in the Lord, D. M.

P. S. Margaret Johnston left the school 13th March. Had a Bible. Though not *fully* taught, yet very tolerably so. She has gone to her uncle in the west, from the necessitous circumstances of her parents.

TO LADY H. HOPE.

March 17, 1780.

I would, before now, as I promised, have written to my dear daughter; but since Friday se'nnight I have not been so well, and have had more writing than usual upon my hands. At present I can spare but a few minutes to regret your want of health, and to assure you of my best wishes and prayers for your spiritual prosperity. Your situation, I know, just now is trying on several accounts: but you know who is with you; you know where your strength lies, and how welcome you are to use it. Then fear not; only believe. In proportion as you do, you will love and obey; and though you are not *yet* all you would be, sovereign grace can easily effect it. Despise not the day of small things; at the same time be determined not to rest short of any blessing Christ has purchased for you. Use all the grace you have; this is the best way to obtain more. O be faithful! Fear nothing but sin: desire nothing but God. Thus fortified, you shall go on steadily; thus emptied, you shall be filled with the fulness of Him that filleth all in all. Stagger not at the promises through unbelief: be strong in faith; and do not reason, "If I am a child of God, why am I thus?" But, "I am a child of God, therefore whatever is amiss in me *shall* be rectified; whatever is lacking *shall* be supplied. In order hereto I am exhorted to pray *always*, and never faint." Be frequent and fervent at a throne of grace; pray *as* you can, and *when* you can, and strive against every hinderance. Thus doing, rest assured that the Lord, whom you seek, will suddenly come to the temple of your heart, and there sit as a refiner, and cleanse the blood he has not cleansed. Then shall you feel his sanctifying power in a greater measure than you have hitherto experienced, and sweetly prove

that perfect love casteth out *all* fear. O that it might be *now* !
Look for it *now* !

When I began this I meant only two or three lines, intending the enclosed to supply my lack of service ; but in speaking or writing *to you* I always find much matter suggested, I trust by the Lord himself, and hope that the effects of both will prove it so. You see the goodness of the Lord in the accounts of the Alcide—what cause for thankfulness ! Lady B——, I hear, is well. I spent much time and used many words yesterday to prevent Miss —— going to a ball of Lady W——ce's, to which she had unhappily been engaged. I thought it would hurt her character, and be productive of very bad consequences. Before she left me she promised faithfully she would send her apology ; but this only *to you*, as it would be a pity that her intentions should transpire. This is a bad place, at present, for young people.

My mother, I have reason to be thankful, is tolerable. *All* is now quiet ; and, upon a retrospective view, though I have much cause to remark the goodness of the Lord, I feel equal cause to regret that I have not been more faithful. Even *this evil* my God generally turns to my advantage, by making it a spur to greater activity and faithfulness against the next opportunity. I long to live more for God. Of late he has given me many occasions of acting for him, and it is truly my meat and drink in this respect to do his will. O to *live for eternity*. Eternity ! it is an awful thought ; let us ever keep it in view ; then shall we live as we ought.

I must now conclude, after saying it some time ago occurred to me, that my letters, from being always on one subject, and written with many interruptions, must certainly be full of repetitions, though you do not say so.

May the Lord enable you “to rejoice evermore, to pray without ceasing, and in every thing to give thanks,” which will give much satisfaction to, my dear daughter,

Your affectionate parent in the Lord,

D. M.

TO LADY H. HOPE.

March 25, 1780.

How is my dear daughter ?—pressing forward, I hope, in the good way, though hinderances strew all her road ? No difficulty, no danger, need retard our progress heavenward ; *sin only*, that accursed thing, robs us of our peace, keeps us back, and interrupts that sweet communion it is our privilege to enjoy with the Father of our spirits. I trust you are kept looking to Jesus, and feel power to cast all your burthens upon him, and to commit all your ways to him in well doing. If so he will sustain you, he will not suffer you to be moved. Lean upon him, live by him, delight in him—and he will give you the desire of your heart. And what is that ? I know it is conformity to your

living Head,—a power in all things to adorn the gospel. And is not this the will of God concerning you? Undoubtedly it is. With what holy boldness then may you plead at a throne of grace for this self-same thing, and be importunate with God; and though in so doing you may be obliged to wrestle, not only against flesh and blood, but also against spiritual wickedness in high places, yet be not dismayed; the Lord says, “Have not I commanded thee? be strong, be not afraid, for the Lord thy God is with thee.” Believe me, it is your privilege to say,—

“I fear no denial, no danger I fear,
Nor start from the trial while Jesus is near.”

And if you cannot plead thus *boldly*, be not discouraged: though often only able to offer your feeble petitions with groanings that cannot be uttered, yet these will find acceptance for the dear Redeemer’s sake; he will not cast out the prayer of the destitute; God is said to put the tears of his people into a bottle. What encouragement to those that are of a fearful heart! Jesus says, “Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.” He carries the lambs in his bosom, and gently leads those that are with young; those who are oppressed, tempted, tried, grieved. What can we ask or wish more? Only an increase of faith to believe all the Lord hath said. May my dear daughter be blessed with this, and made to rejoice in the free, the full salvation of Jesus.

I feel him precious, my soul delights itself in him, I find my supreme happiness consists in *union* with him. O what blessings are consequent upon it. He often permits me to lean upon his bosom; “I taste his love, and cast the world behind,” but still “for closer communion I pine.” For greater conformity to him I love my heart breathes ardently. I now make no apology for touching a little upon the Lord’s goodness to my own soul, as I have told you my motive.

I spent about three hours with Lady G. on Thursday evening, when many grievances were talked and prayed over, as usual, except *one*; this I avoided; she is much better. I had an agreeable interview this week with a lad who was formerly at our school. He left it fully taught, and went to sea, where he has been for some time: he came from Dunbar (where his ship lies) to see his parent. He really promises well. May the Lord own that little seminary more and more. I hope Mr. C. was enabled to be profitable, and that you are supported and comforted under your fatigues about Lady A. May the Lord hear the prayers put up for her, and sweetly draw her heart and affections to himself; and be with you on his own day; so prays, my dear daughter,

Your affectionate parent,

Saturday.

TO LADY H. HOPE.

April 15, 1780.

I intended to write sooner to my dear daughter, but the kindness of Christian friends prevented it; and now I am obliged to give a good deal of my time to my *little charge*,* as I sincerely desire, since the Lord has sent her here, that her stay may answer some important ends.

I was pleased to receive a few lines from you, but beg you will never take up your pen on *my* account, unless when you can conveniently, and when you wish it on *your own*, as I am fully convinced your time is thoroughly occupied at present. Your labour of love will be sweetened by a belief of your being employed agreeably to the will of your heavenly Father; but see that you do not lay greater burdens upon yourself than your body can bear. You have my daily prayers for strength, comfort, and a blessing upon your attempts for the spiritual benefit of *her* so particularly committed to your care. May the Lord perfectly reconcile you to his holy will in this severe dispensation, and enable you cheerfully to give up your dear sister to him; who can not only give her a very gentle dismissal from mortality, but put a song of praise into her mouth for the comfort of surviving friends. This he is entreated to do. May he keep you in perfect peace, and through the abundance of his love raise you above every painful sensation.

Affliction, more or less, is the lot of all God's people. It is a piece of necessary discipline for us while in the body, but if it works for us "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory," have we any cause to complain? Especially when, in the meantime, we are supported and often comforted. I trust he is teaching you many useful lessons in the furnace, so that you shall find cause to praise him both in time and in eternity. It is a great privilege to glorify God in the fires. This favour he confers upon you *now*: O that you may see it in this light, and be enabled to fall in with his gracious designs; showing to all around you that the will of your God is so precious to you, you can sacrifice every thing to it. It is only the power of *sovereign grace* that can effect *this* in the human heart. The natural man opposes it with all his might; but the soul that is truly devoted to God, while it keenly feels in the tenderest part, enjoys a sacred pleasure. In this costly sacrifice you can say with the poet,—

"As those we love decay, we die in part,
String after string is sever'd from the heart."

But you can also say,—

"Though duty does not call,
I love my God with such a love
That I would give him all."

* A niece of Lady Maxwell's.

When you find it can be received, give my best wishes to Lady Ann, and tell her she has daily an interest in my feeble petitions for *every blessing* her present situation calls for.

See that you pay some attention to yourself, for the Lord's sake, and for his work's sake : do not bear your burthens alone. Jesus is willing to bear them for you ; make use of this great privilege. Lady G. was with me on Wednesday, when we had a very free and friendly conversation : and in order to form a proper judgment in a matter on which she wished to have my opinion, I had to mention a subject on which I have been silent for some time ; but it was done in a way that gave both of us much less pain than usual. To the tender care of our great High Priest, whose compassions fail not, I commit my dear daughter, and remain her affectionate parent in Jesus,
Saturday noon.

TO LADY H. HOPE.

Friday afternoon, April 21, 1780.

I began a letter to my dear daughter on Wednesday, but could not get time to finish it. Thursday being fast day at Leith, I was thereby prevented writing, and to-day determined to send her a few lines. Miss N. came to me early in the forenoon, with the (shall I say) melancholy intimation of your dear sister's dismissal from mortality. She seemed so affected by it, I had to keep her a long time with me. But O how much mercy is mixed with this painful dispensation ! How literally has the Most High answered the prayers put up to him for yourself and the dear saint now in glory. Your letter, together with other circumstances, leaves me no room to doubt of the place of her eternal abode.

O how good is God in giving you strength to go through the fatigues of attending a sick and dying bed ; in giving you grace to be faithful to the interests of an immortal soul ; in attaching her so much to you, and thereby more powerfully inclining her to listen to you ; and at last, not only giving you her soul, but enabling her to leave some evidence of its safety for the comfort of surviving friends. May gratitude fill your heart, and praise employ your lips. May her aged parent be supported under the heavy stroke, and, by the blessing of the Most High, find the fruits of righteousness brought forth by it. I feel for Lady B. ; may she enjoy suitable support.

And now, my dear daughter, suffer maternal tenderness to suggest a few hints. In your dear sister's affliction you were enabled to manifest Christian fortitude and patience ; much sweet resignation will *now* be expected from you,—glorify your God by showing it. Let all around you see that your God liveth ; and that as *He* is the object of your *superlative love*, no earthly loss can dry up the spring of your consolation, or make you

repine at his will. In the time of grief we are apt sinfully to neglect the body ; but on these occasions a proper attention to it for the Lord's sake is one proof of resignation to his divine disposals. See that you dwell *above*. When you meditate on your dear departed sister, look not down to the grave ; the former spiritualizes and elevates the soul ; the latter depresses it, and sinks the spirits. One stream of earthly comfort is cut off—let your heart now apply to the fountain ; and may you much more than ever find Jesus “a friend that sticketh closer than a brother.” At present your body and mind are worn out with fatigue ;—impose no long or rigorous services upon either ; neither be surprised if you find for a time little strength in the one or power of attention in the other. Be much in believing, look to Jesus, and select particular and suitable passages of Scripture for your meditation. This will comfort and occupy the mind, which will be too apt to dwell on *one theme* if left to its choice. May your pace heavenward be much quickened ; may the Lord continue his goodness to you, and thereby enable you to comfort others : many eyes will be upon you at present, who, I hope, will reap benefit from your example.

From want of time to think and write accurately, this is a very confused and hasty production ; but flows from a heart desirous of conveying comfort to a beloved daughter, whose spiritual prosperity is dear to her affectionate parent in Jesus,

TO LADY H. HOPE.

April 26, 1780.

I doubt not my dear charge finds now, as formerly, that her God hath not brought her into the thorny path to slay her ; but to prove her, to try her, and to do her good.

God is good in all his dispensations, equally so when he takes as when he gives. Trials sometimes bring us into heaviness ; but even then the soul may be prospering. The refreshing showers are as needful for the health and growth of the plant as the warm beams of the midday sun : and though an intervening cloud for a time may prevent his shining, yet still he goes on ; he runs steadily his appointed circuit. In like manner the soul, though for a season, if need be, is in heaviness, and the clouds of affliction in a degree obscure the bright light of God's countenance, yet she stands not still, her motion heavenward continues. This is a comfortable thought, and we should meditate upon it in the dark and cloudy day. I hope the Lord will bring you nearer to himself by this trial ; *then* your gain will be great. May he save you from all coldness of affection, from all dissipation of mind, from every unnecessary desire ; and in the pursuit of more of the divine life, may he give you to enjoy those blessings the world knows not of :—these last I truly prove. But I must conclude.

Both my mother and sister are confined to bed ; I am blessed with wonderful health, and in tender mercy the Lord has put a keener edge than ever upon my spirit to live wholly to himself, to watch continually unto prayer, and to pray that I may watch. I am also blessed with a deep consciousness of my continual shortcomings :—how good is God ! When you can write easily I shall be glad to know how you do. My little charge has not been well, but is better. That you may “rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and in every thing give thanks,” is the desire of

Your affectionate parent in the Lord, D. M.

Wednesday.

P. S. Poor William has been ill these eleven days. In the midst of so much bodily affliction in the family, what matter of thankfulness that I am from health enabled to minister unto them all !

TO LADY H. HOPE.

April, 1780.

I would have inquired after my dear charge's prosperity before now, but my family has increased by the addition of my eldest brother and his daughter. This, together with headaches, has kept me silent, though not forgetful of one who is often the subject of thought and prayer. May *He* whom of late more than ever I have proved the hearer and answerer of prayer, register the daily petitions put up for you by your parent in the Lord, and in his own time, which is the best, answer them ; then all your spiritual complaints will be banished. God shall be unto you as a place of broad rivers, wide and deep, and you shall walk with him, Enochlike : and, as the king's daughter, be all glorious within. Rest assured this is the will of your heavenly Father concerning you ; plead his promises, believe his word, and you shall feel it : be of good courage, “delight yourself in the Lord, and he will give you the desire of your heart ; commit thy way unto him, and he shall bring it to pass.” I heard a profitable sermon on these words last night : and on Wednesday evening one from, “Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning on her Beloved ?” O, if I could convey to you the happiness I experienced under it ! The Lord was present of a truth ; I sat under his shadow with delight : his fruit was more than sweet to my taste, while he appeared altogether lovely, and gave me powerfully to feel the attractions of redeeming love. May you feel him thus nigh, when you read of his undeserved kindness to your parent.

But I fear, in your present trying situation, the enemy will whisper hard things of God. O believe him not, but though you should be tried to the uttermost, from without and from within, still trust, and believe all is well and wisely ordered ; that though “weeping may endure for a night, joy cometh in the morning :”

this you are warranted to believe, because you love God, and are daily endeavouring, through faith in Jesus, to do and suffer all his holy will : the present dispensation calls for the latter in an eminent degree ; may you feel constant resignation, and be enabled to say, "It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good." This temper will glorify him, and increase your own comfort, and also make you more useful to others. I know not whether what I now write suits the present frame of your mind ; I shall be glad if it does, and still more so if it affords the smallest consolation.

I took a long airing on Thursday with Lady G. ; she was poorly, both in body and mind ; our intercourse was *free* and *sweet*. My little niece seems a fine girl, but will require much attention and care. O that I may be faithful and successful. I felt reluctant to the charge, from different causes ; but I look upon it as a piece of work given me to do by the Lord, and, as such, would sweetly submit. She has been much indulged, and mostly brought up with her brothers, which has given a masculine tincture to her manners, and strength, and self-will ; yet she seems inclined to listen to me. A gilt Turkey Bible has procured me some influence with her ; which I hope will increase ; to my daughter I am thus particular. I think you have been of use to Mrs. H.

May you be strengthened with strength from on high, in body and mind, and be kept in perfect peace in the midst of many trials, and to-morrow feel the word of your God, spirit and life, in private and secret ; and also be blessed with the gift of convincing speech. So prays, my dear daughter,

Your affectionate parent in the best of bonds,

Saturday.

D. M.

TO LADY H. HOPE.

Taymouth, Sept. 4, 1780.

I did not mean to write to you till I heard from you ; but I am importuned to do it by this post, that you might apply to Lord Hopetown in favour of Mr. Y., for the parish of Bathgate, vacant at present by the death of Mr. W. I make no doubt it is engaged already, as he has been in a dying state for some time. Dr. W. and Dr. H. seem to have it much at heart to provide for Mr. Y. I believe he is a good man, and might answer very well in a small quiet parish. I suppose all the advantage that would accrue from an application just now to Lord Hopetown, would be an opening for preferment on some future occasion, if he be properly recommended : I mean by persons not suspected of enthusiasm.

I should be glad to hear how you made out your journey, and how Lady G. has been since. You have both enjoyed all that

air and exercise can do for you this summer ; I hope both will be benefited by it.

I move on here in my confined sphere, with little of either ; but it is the sphere of *present* duty, and that makes it pleasant. It is a great privilege to be permitted to smooth, in any degree, the path of old age, to attend the dying bed, and to attempt to lessen the distresses of that painful period. O that at last my dear parent may have a gentle dismissal from mortality, with a bright setting sun.

I have been much distressed with the toothache since you went, even to agony ; but cannot express how much of the presence of Jesus I enjoyed at the same time ; indeed it beggars all expression, for faith seemed lost in sight, and hope in full fruition. O what a friend does the believer enjoy in Christ ! What cause have I to praise him !

“ My God, the spring of all my joys,
The life of my delights !
The glory of my brightest days,
And comfort of my nights.”

Truly I may say so ; but I want more of his image, more of his mind, more of his Spirit : my heart pants for more power to promote his cause, to live to his glory. I make no apology for writing thus freely of myself ; you know I mean by it to lead you to admire the *Bestower*, not the *enjoyer* ; to increase your love to him, and trust in him. But that you may not suppose my joys are without any alloy, I must add, I have endured most severe inward conflicts, which even the sensible presence of Christ could not remove. Indeed, it made him more precious to me ; I found my own weakness, and that without him I should have been consumed in a moment by the power and malice of my foes. With love to Lady G. and a maternal blessing to Lady H. H., I continue, while she wishes it, her affectionate parent in Jesus,

D. M.

TO LADY H. HOPE.

Tuesday, September 19, 1780.

I have not been able till now to inform my dear daughter that, on Sunday morning, the 17th, between twelve and one, I lost my dear parent.* From indisposition of body, and want of

* On this mournful occasion, Lady Maxwell made the following entry in her Diary :—

“ September 27. Words cannot express what I have gone through since last date. It has been a time of great outward distress, occasioned by the death of my much loved and most affectionate parent. Her advanced years, and an affliction of some months, might have prepared me for her dissolution. In a measure I was led to apprehend it, yet when it came it was truly painful to endure. My judgment and I hope my will acquiesced :

proper recollection, I cannot enter into particulars. My nature has felt keenly ; and though I hope my judgment and will acquiesced in the dispensation, yet there was a great struggle between nature and grace. She, I trust, is with the Lord.

“ Her languishing head is at rest,
Its thinking and aching are o'er ;
The quiet, immovable breast
Is heaved by affliction no more :
The heart is no longer the seat
Of trouble and torturing pain ;
It ceases to flutter and beat,
It never shall flutter again.”

These words have passed so often through my mind since Sunday, that they have flowed almost unintentionally from my own pen. Farewell ! Remember me to Lady G. and believe me,
Your affectionate parent in Jesus,

TO LADY H. HOPE.

Edinburgh, November 4, 1780.

I found my dear daughter's letter last night on coming home. I had intended going to Glasgow on Wednesday for different reasons, but was taken ill on Tuesday morning, and confined for some days, which prevented it.

Could I with propriety have avoided it, I would not have come to town this winter. There is a sad blank in my house, and my dear mother's image is ever present with me. I mourn inwardly for her, yet I trust I am resigned to the dispensation that deprived me of her. Yes, I think the Lord did well and wisely ; and I also think I do not grieve his Spirit in feeling the loss of a much loved parent. Praised be my God, I can believe she is with Christ.

I had much retirement in the country, and I trust good was done to others. I took Romaine with me, and kept him diligent in visiting the sick, giving money to the poor, instruction to the ignorant, distributing books, and exhorting and examining on Sunday evenings,—and you would be surprised with his talents. Sometimes we had seventy or eighty hearers. They show a

but my feelings revolted. Nature felt keenly ; and, what added greatly to my sorrow, she was not able, when near death, to speak to the glory of God, to triumph over all her doubts and fears. Yet I cannot doubt of her eternal happiness. She sweetly resigned her breath without sigh or groan, and, I trust, fell asleep in Jesus as one of the saints. ‘They that sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.’ A sable cloud of grief has overspread my mind : my health has also suffered ; my spirits and nerves have been much affected. O that I may glorify God under this bereaving dispensation ! I attempt to roll my burthen upon him, and believe he will not suffer me to be materially moved. The surface of my soul is much agitated, but at bottom are the grounds of safety, comfort, and joy, as usual. The present is a season of heaviness through manifold temptations. O that I may be brought out of them all as gold tried in the fire !”

wonderful desire to be instructed, though, I am sorry to say it, there is the most inconceivable ignorance among them.

I am much hurried this morning, and have only time to say that I hope your soul and body are better. I think you should come in, unless you see *solid* reasons against it; if so, you will not be a loser by your stay. The Lord direct you in all things, prays your affectionate parent,
D. M.

P. S. I am better! Jesus is with me; yet it is a season of temptation of various kinds.

TO LADY H. HOPE.

Edinburgh, November 15, 1780.

I wished and intended to write my dear daughter on Tuesday, but was prevented from different causes, which I regret because I think she is rather low at present, and I fear temptation is prevailing. Why are you cast down? Why is your soul disquieted within you? If you are in heaviness through manifold temptations, you know this is permitted by your heavenly Father for wise purposes: and, by his blessing, I hope it will produce salutary effects.

There are two observations made by that good man Haliburton, which I think are applicable to your case, so far as I know it. They are, "that we must never judge of our state by what we feel in the time of distress and heaviness. That in order to form a just estimate either of ourselves or others, we must balance the *present grace* with the *present temptations*, otherwise we shall always undervalue it." You have lately, I see by your letters, had severe trials, both, perhaps, outward and inward. Now if the grace which was given you enabled you to sustain them without murmuring against God, it was greater, upon the whole, than that which before enabled you to rejoice. I am not surprised that these pressures weigh down your soul, and in a degree darken it for the present; and though you should even for a season lose the direct witness of justification, it will not be long till the Sun of righteousness break out again and shine bright upon our soul—perhaps to-day, perhaps while you read this; for he is a God at hand, and not afar off. But take care that you do not grieve his Spirit by indulging gloomy thoughts. "Man was not born in shades to lie." Arise, and shake yourself from the dust: what strength you have, use it for God, and he will increase it: work your work by times, and in his time he will give you a full reward.

Never be afraid of hurting me by any thing you impart to me; always write and speak freely when you wish it; perhaps reading the enclosed may animate and comfort you.

The Lord will, I hope, make up your loss in not getting in on this solemn occasion; it is a precious ordinance. Can the annals

of time or records of history produce such an instance of love ?
The Lord of glory dying for sinful man !

“ O Lamb of God, was ever pain,
Was ever love like thine.”

Lady G. is looking wonderfully well, and is in good spirits.

I have set a small subscription on foot just now for my chairman, John Thompson, who has lost his *all* by fire on Sunday last, except the clothes he had on, and his chair. May I put down your name for a small matter ?—I have been confined since Sunday night with a cold, but not to bed. I hope your maid tarries with you. With maternal affection I remain, my dear daughter,

Your parent in the Lord,

TO LADY H. HOPE.

Saturday, November 25, 1780.

Though feeble and languid from yesterday's affliction in my head and stomach, I wish to write you a few lines, as I see by your letter that you are very low. I think, from what you write me, it proceeds partly, if not altogether, from your body. Nothing so weakens the body, and of course the nerves and spirits, as the complaint you mention. I hope by proper care, and the blessing of the Most High upon the means used, all will be set soon to rights again. I hope you take light and nourishing things : jellies, strong broths, chocolate, &c., &c. If your stomach will digest it, a bit of solid food, with some glasses of red port ; if too heavy cold, physicians say that a small portion of warm water put to it makes it lighter for a weak stomach, and still more nourishing. I am glad you are able to go abroad : take care of cold. O endeavour to be sweetly resigned to the will of your God, whatever aspect it wears ; he means *all* should work for your good. Do not dwell upon disagreeable events, either past or present ; consider how much worse things might be, and from thence draw matter of thankfulness.

Parting with a dear friend, after five months' sweet enjoyment, would no doubt try your tender feelings ; but remember how *unexpectedly* God bestowed such a *long* time of comfort, and rather thank him for it, than mourn inordinately when separated only for a time from your friend ; and do not forget that wherever you are the *eternal God is your refuge*—underneath you are *his everlasting arms*. How safe, then, and how privileged ! And though I confess the want of a Christian friend to speak to when in trouble is a great privation, yet you must remember, *Jesus is ever with you*. In all your afflictions he is afflicted ; he is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother ; his ear is open to your every prayer ; he hears your sighs ; and if it can afford you any consolation, remember you have an affectionate parent, within a few

miles, who wishes to give you every proof in her power of her maternal love.

Lady G. was with me on Wednesday, she looked well and in good spirits, and much satisfied with her intended journey. She said she had had a headache for some days; but her looks did not indicate any complaints. I saw her in the morning after she was in the chaise, and she looked well and cheerful; had a fine day, and was to be at Selkirk at night, at Longtown on Friday, and Penrith on Saturday; Mr. J. goes that length with her. Mrs. N. is just gone, after sitting an hour with me; she also is well and in good spirits. I have just received your letter; am happy to see by it you are better, and I hope that you will wax stronger and stronger in body and soul. The guinea was most unexpected; please to return grateful respects. The Lord has wonderfully succeeded my little attempt for the chairman.

Your fears are caused by the weak state of your spirits and nerves, and also your bad dreams. I am no stranger to either, especially distressing dreams. An increase of faith and love is the best recipe. Keep your mind easy; be not too rigorous in your exactions from either mind or body at present. Your path of duty, just now, is to *suffer* the will of God; when he gives you more health and strength he will expect you should *do* it: rest satisfied he will never try you above what you are able.

It is by no means an uncommon temptation to be cast down, instead of being animated by bright examples of the power of God. I myself have formerly felt it; but strive against it. And now, my dear daughter, farewell. May the Lord disappoint all your fears, and exceed your expectations, prays

Your affectionate parent in Jesus,

D. M.

TO LADY H. HOPE.

Edinburgh, December 6, 1780.

I was afraid my dear daughter's silence was owing to her situation being no better than when she wrote before, and am sorry to see my suspicions have been too just. I have no doubt but all is in mercy, and am equally certain that the Lord will not try you above what you are able, because he hath said it; neither will he, I trust, permit you to bring any reproach upon his holy name. *Resignation* is what he chiefly calls you to at present, without reasoning upon what is past, present, or to come. Pray for a silent spirit. Say not, "Why is it thus?" But, "Lord, what thou wilt, and how thou wilt, only make me altogether thine." This is what you wish, and this is the will of God concerning you. How often have you prayed for this! and if the Lord is taking his own way to answer your prayers, and carry on his work in your soul, should you not be satisfied? At present, I am persuaded, the state of your nerves and spirits is the

cause or most of your distress: the former being out of order clouds the mind, depresses the spirits, unhinges the whole frame, cuts asunder the sinews of all active endeavours, either for the present world or futurity, incapacitates for just reasoning either with ourselves or others, and often leads to the most erroneous conclusions. On all these accounts, there is not only a propriety in but necessity for avoiding all investigation or examination of our spiritual state till the sky clears, and the clouds scatter, and the nerves and spirits have recovered their proper tone. The Lord, I hope, will bless the means you are using for this end. I am sorry you should apprehend that confinement will be necessary for months; if it is, should not you try a chamber horse? Is not porter too strong for your stomach, without exercise? It is for mine. Whatever does not digest creates flatulency, and greatly increases these panics and unpleasant sensations you mention. Even port wine I find frequently heavy upon my stomach.

Do not grieve the Holy Spirit by a too great attachment to the creature. I used to think you quite free here. O *seek and find all your happiness in God*. Be satisfied to have or want the creature as he chooses. It is *this* only that procures the *truest* enjoyment of worldly good. I trust your captivity will soon be turned, and a song of praise put in your mouth. *All* the painful feelings you mention I have experienced at different times, and have also been favoured with wonderful victories over them when I least expected it. I mention this for your encouragement. I have been unwell since I wrote last with various complaints; and to-day much so with a headache. The school account has been ready many months, but a point of delicacy prevented my sending it; and in my last I entirely forgot to say that I wished you might do nothing in money matters but what was perfectly convenient. Your charities, I suppose, have been more extensive this last six months than usual, and therefore, I think, the £5 due to the poor at last term may be dispensed with, as my last remittance is not all expended. I must conclude, after saying I hope nothing I have here said will hurt you. You never mentioned a Miss S.'s dependent state, that I recollect. When you can easily write, shall be glad to hear how you do. Look every minute for deliverance, and ever believe me,

Your affectionate parent in Jesus,

D. M.

TO LADY H. HOPE.

December 25, 1780.

I would before now have answered my dear daughter's letter, but I have had a cold, which afflicted me a good deal, and has confined me these ten days past, part of the time to bed. I could only return a verbal message by the servant yesterday;

to-day I am rather better, but my eyes have been much affected, which must be an apology for a short letter.

I am very much indebted to you and Lady G., as are the students, for contributing so cheerfully toward their support. I do not see I could with any propriety give them *wine*, as it is the *necessaries*, not the *delicacies* of life, with which I mean to supply them, and even that only in order to enable them to pursue their studies : I shall therefore pay into their stock £1 5s. which, I think you say, Lady G. values the wine at, and also the guinea and half in my hand, and may the Lord bless and smile upon the feeble attempt made for his glory. I do think it is a capital charity, and if I were rich would certainly do something toward establishing a fund for it.*

Your complaints of yourself, my dear madam, may be just, and they may not : but these feelings seldom hurt us if they do not degenerate into despondency. If they do, they prove pernicious, because they then weaken our hands, and as it were cut asunder the sinews of our endeavours to get free from them ; but if they prove a spur to prayer, believing, and activity, they answer valuable ends. The most holy, faithful, and fruitful Christians have reason to be ashamed before God that they come so far short of what they ought to be, and might be. Even they, while in the body, are at times in danger of sinking into supineness of spirit, and of thus becoming slothful. We must not cease crying, "Evermore quicken us, O Lord, and we will call upon thee ; draw us, and we will run after thee."

Now that the year is drawing near a close, may I ask, How stands your book of spiritual accounts ? You have had many mercies, many helps, many trials ; out of some of the latter you have been delivered ; others are permitted, for wise ends, to remain. Give no answer to my query unless it suits you : but believe my daily prayer ascends for your spiritual prosperity, and that of your amiable friend. If Lady T. H. is with you, I hope she will receive lasting benefit. I find Baxter profitable. Smith's book, I think, may do good : I mean to circulate it among my young friends. In some places he is too minute, and descends beneath the dignity of his subject ; in others he is hardly enough guarded, and *some* readers may find fault.

But I must have done, after wishing Lady G. and you the possession of *every* blessing the birth of Christ has procured for sinners ; and as many returns of the season as shall be for the glory of God, the benefit of mankind, and the profit and comfort of your own souls. So prays in sincerity, my dear madam,

Your ever affectionate,

D. M.

* This alludes to another of her ladyship's charities. She for many years contributed toward the support of some of the pious divinity students, in the University of Edinburgh, when she found their circumstances were such as to require assistance.

The selection from her ladyship's papers for this year, shall be closed by the following extracts from her diary :—

“ December 4. I think my soul has suffered lately from two causes. The *first*, a want of full resignation to the dispensations of Providence : the *second*, too great fears about worldly things : this had nearly degenerated into anxiety. I detected the workings of this evil while in the house of God. My intention was good : I wished to manage my temporal affairs with discretion, that in nothing the gospel might be blamed. But when in any thing we *exceed*, we *err*. The apostle says, ‘ Be careful for nothing : but in every thing, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God,’ Phil. iv. 6. Here is plain *duty* ; that performed, *rest there and leave all to God*. But how easy to slide into anxiety. This temptation assumes the appearance of a *laudable* concern about worldly things, and is not easily discerned. Holy Father, in all things may I be taught of thee ! For some days I have feared that I was not so zealous as usual in attempting to do good : I doubt not in this my hands have been weakened by the prevalence of the above mentioned temptation.

“ — 25. The Lord is good. He still favours me with delightful enjoyment of himself, and gives me to know him as the God who heareth prayer, and who performs all things for me. He has wrought out a great deliverance for me, though not in the way I expected and had attempted, and which did succeed agreeably to the views and desires I then had : but from several causes my views and desires were suddenly changed, while I was kept much in prayer for direction from on high, and for submission to the divine will. Suddenly, matters took a very unlooked-for turn, and deliverance was sent me from a very unexpected quarter. My views and desires were also made entirely to correspond with that mode of deliverance appointed, I trust, by Him who *cannot err*. All who were immediately concerned were made willing to fall in with my inclinations, though contrary to their own interests, in so remarkable a degree, that I concluded, surely this is the Lord's doing. Yet it was so opposite to what I had thought only a few days before was the will of God, that it had almost proved a stumbling block. I plead earnestly with the Lord that I might be preserved from evil reasoning ; and that the enemy might not be permitted to gain any advantage over me, by suggesting that God did not hear me, neither direct my steps ; but that I was left to mistake his will, and to follow my own *unsettled inclinations*. In this respect my God has been tender of me ; my mind has been kept in peace, free from unbelieving fears, and unprofitable reasonings. I am perfectly satisfied with what has occurred. I have also felt a grateful sense of the goodness of my God, and my trust in him is hereby strengthened. I have had sweet but short visits from Jesus, and have found him truly precious.

“ — 30. I have devoted an hour and half for the purpose of taking a retrospective view of this year—of the Lord’s dealings with my soul—of the mercies received—the returns made—of outward trials and inward conflicts—of deliverances from them—and of my progress in the ways of God. Upon an impartial inquiry I saw I had received many mercies, had gone through many temptations, and had experienced many deliverances from them; had enjoyed a good measure of bodily health, with a sensibility of my obligations to God for it, and strong desires to improve it to his glory. I have enjoyed, in general, constant desires for an increase of grace, for the full accomplishment of the promises relative to sanctification, and these desires have been steadily breathed forth in prayer, though not always with the same degree of frequency and fervour. Through the greater part of this year a degree of uncertainty, with respect to the state of my soul, as it relates to the blessing of sanctification, has frequently perplexed me, and I believe has deprived me of much comfort I might otherwise have enjoyed. The use I endeavoured to make of this trial was, to cry more earnestly to the Lord for the full accomplishment of the promises : that he would shine upon his work in my heart, and give me to see light in his light; that I might give all the glory to him, while I took the comfort to myself. I have seen and felt more of the emptiness of the creature than formerly, and have had more power steadily to confess God than ever. Upon the whole I hope, if any thing, I have rather gained ground this year; though I am deeply conscious that I have been very unfaithful, very unfruitful, little better than a cumberer of the ground. If my God sees meet to spare me another year, O that he may quicken me in his ways; cause me to cleave to him, and to follow him fully as one of his witnesses for the truth! May he ever enable me to see the way in which he would have me to walk.”

CHAPTER XVI.—1781.

Correspondence with Lady Hope—Miss Ritchie—The Hon. Miss Napier—
Reflections on temptations—Diary continued.

TO LADY H. HOPE.

Edinburgh, February 14, 1781.

I WROTE a few hasty lines last night to my *dear daughter*: having more time to-day, maternal affection inclines me to be more particular than I could at that time. I trust you feel the same degree of strength in body and mind that has been graciously allowed for some time. One capital stream of creature comfort is now cut off, by the wise appointment of Him that

cannot err. I know you would wish the strong current of affection, which ran in *that* channel, *now* to return to the *fountain*: and surely your God wills it too. It is the best improvement that can be made of affliction; and O, what gainers are those who thus improve it! They are wise for themselves, they are wise for others, and they are wise in the estimation of God. In order to be thus wise much prayer is needful; peculiarly so in these seasons, because the emptiness of created good generally then appears in a very clear point of view, and the heart feels more disunited from the things of time, more susceptible of divine impressions, and more desirous of being *closely* united to what appears a *substantial*, a *lasting good*, of which neither our own death, nor that of others, can deprive us. From these causes, the prayers of the afflicted are more free from worldly desires, are offered up with more fervour, and are, I believe, more acceptable to the Most High, than those that ascend in the sunshine of worldly prosperity. To use a plain simile, the iron is hot, and the hammer moulds it more easily than when it is cold. May the Lord pour a spirit of prayer upon my dear daughter at this time, and make her frequent and fervent at a throne of grace; that she may come out of the furnace more pure, and sensibly prove her affliction bringing forth the peaceable fruits of righteousness.

There is one device of Satan to which I fear you may be exposed just now, and from which you may suffer; and therefore, with the freedom of a parent solicitous for your profit and comfort, I would caution you against it. Do not dwell upon the distressing thought of not having obtained the evidence *you wished* of your dear father's eternal welfare. This often diminishes the Christian's comfort, grieves the Spirit of God, and proves a fruitless source of pain. When the thought occurs carry it to God, and by prayer entreat him, if agreeable to his holy will, to give you that persuasion of your parent's happiness that will satisfy you; and if denied, to give you power to leave it with himself, who is the Judge of all the earth, and who will do right. The Lord, in some cases, gives the former; and when that has been for wise ends denied, bestows the latter; and may he give you what he sees best for you.

He loves you better than you believe, and will make *all* work for your good: I fear that both your body and mind will sink in a degree; be not surprised at it, nor too rigorous in your exactions from either. At present you are called to believe, to love, to suffer. When *stronger*, active service will be expected; but not till then. I hope a proper attention will be paid to the body for the soul's sake. If you look on me as a parent, see that you use me as such, by writing me freely, and telling me if in any way, except by prayer, I can help you. The eternal God be your refuge, and underneath you be the everlasting arms.

Lady W.'s situation calls for much sympathy; *her* loss is *great*: may the Lord make it up. All will feel less or more. This is not their rest; how happy are those that find rest in Christ. When you can easily, I shall be glad to know how you do. According to custom, I have been much interrupted since I began this, which must excuse many improprieties. Believe me, my dear daughter, ever

Your affectionate parent in the Lord,

D. M

TO LADY H. HOPE.

Edinburgh, March 27, 1781.

I thank my dear daughter for her letter which I have just received. I was desirous to know how she did, and the more so, lest any thing I had said had helped to make the scale preponderate in favour of remaining at O. H., and perhaps thereby hurt her health. I trust your determination was of God: it appeared to me from the beginning the *most excellent* way, (and in this path I would ever wish my dear daughter to walk) even without the *knowledge of particular circumstances*. Those you mention in your last do not surprise me, and still more confirm my judgment of the propriety of the choice you have made: that it is denying yourself I doubt not; but the cup, I hope, will be sweetened by a sense of the presence of your God, and a consciousness of having done what you believed most for his glory. If the Lord make you useful in healing breaches, or preventing their widening, it will afford you more pleasing sensations than the Bath journey could have given you: considering the service done to others, beside the claim given you to the blessing promised to the peace-makers. Be not discouraged though you cannot pray as you would; perhaps the Holy Spirit never more effectually helps our infirmities in this way than when we feel as if entirely unable to make known our wants by prayer and supplication: still continue to embrace the opportunities offered for secret prayer, and the Lord will, in his own time, give the spirit of the duty: in the meantime rejoice in the *continual* and *prevalent intercession* of your great High Priest, who is tenderly touched with a feeling of *all* your infirmities. O dwell more upon the rich privileges to which you stand entitled in virtue of your union with him. What a rich source of sacred consolation should this prove to you in your darkest and most disconsolate hours—though from weakness of body, weakness of faith, remaining corruption, the power of temptation, and the force of various trials, the *joyous sense* of it may not always be your portion. Yet Jesus remains invariably the wisdom, the righteousness, the sanctification, and redemption of every believing soul. O plead your privileges in the face of Satan and sin; for all is yours because ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's.

But I must now mention the distress of your friend, Mrs.

Hunter, and family. The dear little infant was called home this morning. She bears it wonderfully. It is a very severe trial; may the Lord make it up by the increase of communion with himself. I mean to see her this afternoon. I saw the child some days ago, and gave it my blessing, which felt sweet: I did not think its race was to be so short; but O, how much better is it with the Lord than in the body! How uncertain all worldly enjoyments! O that both parents may be blessed with that sweet, that unutterable peace which creature comforts can never bestow. I have had many pains and aches for days past, but feel much cause of thankfulness that I am not confined to bed. Our neighbour, Mrs. B., is summoned hence most unexpectedly, in the midst of affluence, friends, and children, and her husband abroad. She had just purchased Mr. C.'s house. "So pass the shadowy scenes of life away!" While we live, may we live to the Lord; when we die, may we die to the Lord; living or dying, may we be the Lord's.

Wednesday morning. Since writing the above, I have been near two hours with Mrs. H. with satisfaction. She is in a sweet, resigned spirit, though feeling much. I am indebted for the two copies of Alleine, and obliged by your informing me about Lady G. That the Lord may ever guide you by his counsel, and revive you by his grace, is the prayer of, my dear daughter,

Your ever affectionate parent in Jesus,

D. M.

TO LADY H. HOPE.

May 16, 1781.

I hope my dear daughter got well home, and suffered no bad effects from her little excursion to town; and that her mind is in some measure at peace concerning the subjects of conversation then considered. With the freedom of a parent I would say, you require *more fortitude* and *less feeling*, for your own quiet and happiness. You have only to ask it, and He who "giveth liberally and upbraideth not" will bestow it. He hath promised to "withhold no manner of thing that is good from them that walk uprightly." "Seek," then, "that you may find; knock, and it *shall* be opened unto you."

But no degree of grace will exempt you from trials; these we must expect while in the body, and should endeavour to bear them with a holy fortitude and a sweet spirit; knowing that they are permitted for wise purposes, and, through grace, answer valuable ends. Be thankful; the time hastens on apace when sin and sorrow shall be no more, when all tears shall be wiped from your eyes, and then you shall for ever bask in the beams of redeeming love. Amazing thought, that sinners should be thus honoured, made thus happy. O the height, the depth of divine love! Who can fathom it! Arise, then, my dear daughter,

and shake yourself from the dust of griefs, fears, temptations, trials, &c., &c. Put on your beautiful garments, the spotless robe of Jesus' righteousness. With this he has clothed you; arrayed in this, bold shall you appear in the presence of God, and conquer death, sin, and hell. What, then, should discourage you? Surely the high praises of your God should ever be in your mouth.

Not being so well as to go abroad, I have not seen Mrs. H— since you was with her; but I hope you convinced her that your objections to her proposal were well founded.

Enclosed, for the sake of exactness, is the school account. Upon looking over my Bibles, I am three short of what is necessary for the children that are to leave the school at this term. Do you incline to send any of yours, if you have any? if not, I can easily procure them here.

Since writing the above, I received your letter, and with pleasure learn by it you were not the worse for being in town on Monday. How good is God; to him only we are indebted for all our mercies; therefore to him be all the glory. Many thanks for the agreeable intelligence about Lady G. I am to-day much afflicted with the headache and toothache, and not able to be at the church; but in every situation remain my dear daughter's affectionate parent in the Lord,
D. M.
Thursday.

TO LADY H. HOPE.

May 25, 1781.

I wrote a few hasty lines to my dear daughter on Tuesday morning, since which I had her letter, and was sorry it was not in my power to make any return to it by the chaise. Why, my dear madam, make any apology for doing what I have repeatedly asked you to do. If writing *freely* to me will give you any *relief*, you know it will give me *satisfaction*. Do not be afraid of afflicting me; the Lord will not permit me to feel any more of that than will answer a good purpose. What good do we reap from friends, if they do not bear our burthens as well as partake of our joys? I sincerely sympathize with you, and daily endeavour to remember you before Him who is afflicted in all your afflictions. I wish I could administer comfort to you. I think many of your painful feelings at present are the result of powerful temptations. The devices of Satan are many and subtle; but fear him not; fly from him, if you cannot resist him steadfastly by faith; I mean, do not venture to reason with him, but fly to Jesus, and lean upon him as the Beloved of your soul, and he will give you victory. O that he would smile upon you, so as to banish all your fears.

I found him sweetly near last night, while hearing a sermon from, "Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness leaning

upon her Beloved?" I would willingly suspend my own comfort, could I convey to you what I then felt. But Jesus is as much *your* friend as he is *mine*: will he then withhold from you any degree of consolation he sees for your good? O no: look to him by faith, and he will supply your every want, and prove a friend dearer, infinitely dearer, than any earthly companion. O that while you read these few simple lines, you may feel him diffusing a heavenly sweetness throughout your soul, and thereby enable you to cast yourself and all your cares upon him, so that for the future you may praise him for all that is past, and trust him for all that is to come. Amen and amen. Lord, hear and answer the prayer of thy servant.

I hope you are mistaken about the state of your soul: I *doubt not* but you are, in believing that you are an inconvenience in the family, and useless. May the Lord direct you in all things, and give you to believe that he does. Be not surprised at want of health at present; the strong and continued east wind is bearing hard upon many much stronger than you. As the weather grows milder your complaints I hope will lessen. I know the weakness of your body presses down your soul, but *all* will be overruled for good. My affliction was from bile in my stomach, which caused continued headaches and sickness: but I am better. O for a heart flaming with grateful love to God for all his mercies! O for more zeal for his glory, more activity in his cause, and more conformity to his will! I had much satisfaction in examining the scholars that left the school at this term. Enclosed is a note of them, and of those admitted. I am called away, and must conclude with my best blessing. Ever my dear daughter's affectionate parent in the Lord,

D. M

TO LADY H. HOPE.

Edinburgh, June, 1781.

Not having it in my power to do more on this occasion for my dear daughter, I have endeavoured to follow her with my frequent petitions to the Father of mercies for her preservation, comfort, and usefulness upon the road; that she might be brought in peace to her dear friend, after having seen and felt the loving kindness of her God and Saviour; and I hope my feeble prayers will be heard in her behalf. What cannot God do for those that love and serve him; and what has not Christ purchased for them! *All, all* is theirs. How rich is the charter of believers, in virtue of their union with Jesus; the blessings of the upper and nether springs are theirs; ample provision is made for their every want in time; and blessings, more than heart can conceive, are prepared for them in eternity. O who would not be a Christian.

My dear daughter, in spite of sin and Satan, triumph in your privileges, while you, *Marylike*, lie low at the Redeemer's feet.

O that he would speak from the mercy seat, and say, "Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee;" then all your fetters would fall off, and you would arise, go forth, and follow the Lord with still greater vigour and comfort for ever. We know that "*light* is sown for the righteous, and *gladness* for the upright in heart;" and that though "many are the afflictions of the righteous, yet the Lord delivereth him out of them all;" comfortable words! The Lord has already made bare his holy arm in your behalf, and brought salvation to your soul. He hath brought you out of darkness into his marvellous light, and registered your name in his book of life. O what endless praise is due for these invaluable blessings! And what remains, but that you follow on to know more and more of the goodness of the Lord; gain greater and greater degrees of conformity to the divine image; spend and be spent in the cause of Him who has done so much for you; that at last you may have an abundant entrance ministered unto you into the mansions of eternal felicity, where you shall cast your crown at the Redeemer's feet, and sing the song of Moses and the Lamb for ever and for ever.

What you say in answer to my invitation satisfies me that my apprehension was wrong. It is an agreeable surprise to hear that you felt so much pain at parting with me; I rather thought that such regret would have been mostly lost in desire to get from O. H., together with the prospect of future happiness in meeting with a dear friend. Indeed, from my knowledge of myself, I am not prone to believe any one can be much attached to me. The two volumes of letters shall be sent as desired.

As it respects the young man: from the circumstances you mention, I should think it would be well enough to let him have the money now; it might probably be of more service at this time, when his expense will be great in fitting out for the East Indies, than three times the sum afterward, when perhaps he may have saved money. It is a *suitable occasion* for a present, and will save you the trouble of putting him in your will: by economy, perhaps, you will make it up, but, if you live and want, you can easily borrow that sum. This is contrary to my general rules, but these must always admit of *exceptions*.

Since writing the above, I have received your kind letter. Thanks to a gracious God for his goodness in carrying you so far in safety. I have been prevented writing so soon as you wished. I hope Mr. M.'s opinion is good, and will satisfy. You will read in the papers of poor Colonel W.'s death. May God speak to your heart with sweet power, and raise you above all your fears and weaknesses, and greatly sanctify your intercourse with Lady G. and any of his people you may meet with: may he also bless the waters to you, by putting healing virtue into them, that you may return to us with a thriving soul and healthy

body. All friends here are well. I joined you with me yesterday in a collection made by the "Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge." We had a good sermon by the minister of Alloa upon, "The writing was, Jesus of Nazareth, king of the Jews." Afterward Mr. and Mrs. W. dined with me. On Thursday I had Mr. and Mrs. P.; he preached on Sunday and Wednesday evening at Lady G.'s chapel.

Do you not now wish me to conclude? Surely you may, from the length of this: I shall expect to hear soon, with many particulars about yourself and Lady G. Peace be with you, my dear daughter.

Your ever affectionate parent in the Lord,

D. M.

TO LADY H. HOPE.

June 22, 1781.

My dear daughter's letter this forenoon was satisfactory; the hope of another reaching her before she leaves Buxton makes me now sit down to write, though very unable. I have been exceeding ill since I wrote last, and am brought very low in body, though recovering. I have had an unusually severe attack of the bilious complaint in my stomach, with some severe symptoms to which I have not been accustomed: these have left me very weak, and by it all my schemes of necessary economy are defeated. Mr. W. tells me that there is an *absolute necessity* of my doing something in the way of change of air and exercise. This I cannot do till August, if I live till then; and, even then, you know how very inconvenient it will be: but there is no help for it; the Lord, I hope, will overrule all for his glory, and my final good; but enough of self. Only I must add, that you will, I hope, join me in praising a gracious God, who has supported and comforted me in this last illness, and given me fresh proofs of his *faithfulness* and goodness.

Many thanks for writing me *particularly* about Lady G. and yourself; give my kindest love to her. O that your soul may prosper, and your every step be directed to the glory of God, and your own good; and this I as sincerely wish for Lady G. I trust that you both are getting and doing good. O what is life unless we live to God: he only is worthy to be loved and served: had we a thousand lives, he deserves them all.

Many thanks for the kind things my dear daughter says; I cannot doubt but what *she says comes from her heart*; yet what I wrote her was the genuine sentiment of my mind; "that the knowledge I have of myself makes me hard of belief that any one can be much attached to me." She knows, and I hope believes, how much I am interested in every thing that *concerns her*, and how willingly I would help her in every possible way; yet this is from such a pure, disinterested principle, if I know my own heart, as leads me to look for no return, nor to have any

claim upon her for it, even in point of gratitude or affection. But I have exceeded my strength, and must conclude. May the Lord keep you as the apple of his eye, and make you and your amiable friend mutually profitable to, and comfortable with each other. So prays, my dear daughter,

Your ever affectionate parent in the best of bonds, D. M.

TO LADY H. HOPE.

Edinburgh, July 24, 1781.

Several things have conspired to prevent my daughter hearing from me till now, the particulars of which I will not take up her time in relating. Suffice it to say, it has not been altogether bad health. I have had a return of the bilious complaint, but am better, only this very sultry weather enervates me much.

I am pleased to hear that Lady G. is getting better, and hope you have had *only* a threatening of your complaints. It gives me satisfaction to hear that you have obtained more full and comfortable views of the faithfulness, wisdom, and goodness of God in his dealings with you. This will naturally lead to stronger confidence in him; to more communion with him; to greater zeal for his glory, and activity in his ways. May he enable you to hold fast what he has bestowed, and daily to increase.

The word of God and the Christian's daily experience prove the proneness of the heart to depart from the *chief good*, the grand cause of which is unbelief. Our wanderings are just in proportion to its prevalence. By faith we stand, and our stability depends upon the degree of faith we possess. Happy those who are blessed with a large measure of this divine principle; they are thereby enabled to cleave steadfastly to Jesus, in whom all fulness dwells, and to derive from thence every needful supply. He is the centre of rest to the believing soul, and the *only* source of comfort. May you fully and experimentally prove this.

I am uncertain whether I shall get any thing done this summer—the season is so far advanced, and the weather very hot, and my niece still with me; but all will be overruled for good. Nothing but sin and folly reign here. At present the town is full, and Satan busy. O that the Lord would open the people's eyes, and show them where true happiness is to be found. Mrs. H. is much better. My sister returns best respects. Give my kindest love to Lady G.; and accept of the maternal benediction of

Your affectionate parent in the Lord,

D. M.

TO LADY H. HOPE.

Edinburgh, August 8, 1781.

What has become of my friends at Taymouth? I wrote my dear daughter about two weeks ago, but have had no reply; I hope it is not owing to want of health. I saw, by Mrs. H.'s letter, Lady G. was not so well as her friends could wish. Does she continue poorly, or has change of air been blessed to the establishing of her health? I long to hear particulars of both her and you.

However outward things go, I hope you both enjoy the presence of your Beloved; *that* can sweeten the bitterest cup. The Christian's life is a warfare at the best; happy for us, we are not called to fight in our own strength. Were this the case we should be overcome by the weakest of our foes, but Jesus is our strength as well as our righteousness; therefore, through faith in him we are well able to overcome our strongest enemies. O what a source of constant consolation does our union with him afford us; because he lives we shall live also. He is all in all to the believing soul. O rejoice in, and live up to your great privileges; then will you "rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and in every thing give thanks."

I have been a good deal afflicted with rheumatic complaints, and a disorder in my stomach and bowels, which affected my nerves and spirits. I wish to welcome all that is appointed for me, to have no wish but the will of God, to cleave alike to him in sickness as in health, in adversity as in prosperity, and in death as in life. My sister and niece leave me to-morrow: I hope I shall get to the country the beginning of the week, I fancy to Saughton-hall; I am to have a positive answer about it this day. I have made much inquiry about other places, but can find no other. I have formerly obtained health in that place; and though at present it has the disadvantage of the young woman dying there, yet I think I can put up with it, by sleeping in another room, or perhaps in the same, with another bed. The painting and plastering necessary to be done in my house requires my absence for three or four months longer, and therefore a house near the town suits me better than one at a distance; and if I find the country answer, I may perhaps winter in it: but all future things are uncertain.

Give my kind love to Lady G. Mrs. H. continues well, and all friends much as you left them. Farewell; may the full accomplishment of every gospel promise be the sweet experience of my dear daughter; this will give comfort to her affectionate parent in the Lord,

D. M.

TO MISS RITCHIE.

Saughton-hall, Nov. 11, 1781.

I would before now have acknowledged the receipt of your kind letter, dear madam, but very soon after I received it, I went from home, and was absent a long time. I have been much indisposed for many months, and also in heaviness through manifold temptations. I endured severe inward conflicts; through mercy my faith did not fail, but my joy was much abated. The cup I drank was indeed bitter; but thanks, eternal thanks to my God, who stepped in for my relief: he rebuked the adversary, and put a song of praise in my mouth. I now enjoy peace in all my borders. The Father and the Son make their continual abode with me. Jesus is precious, and I behold him as the King in his beauty: he is ever present with me, and whispers sweet peace to my soul. Help me to praise him, for the deliverance he has wrought out for me; and permit me to entreat you to be earnest at a throne of grace, that I may hold fast the blessing bestowed, and reap all the benefit intended by the severe dispensation. I feel weak and helpless in myself; but my divine Friend is near, in whom is strength. I still am far short of what I expect to be. I have exceeding great and precious promises for my encouragement; and he who cannot lie hath said, not one word shall fail of all the good things whereof he hath spoken. I hope your soul continues to prosper, and that you enjoy a measure of bodily health. Can you meet me at eleven o'clock at a throne of grace every morning? I have it much at heart to wrestle in mighty prayer with God, for the accomplishment of the promises he has given, and wish for the assistance of my Christian friends; among whom, if I may be permitted, I would willingly reckon Miss Ritchie.

Praying that the Lord would send her health, and a cure, and reveal abundance of peace and truth unto her, I remain her affectionate friend, in the best of bonds, D. MAXWELL.*

TO THE HON. MISS NAPIER.

1781.

DEAR MISS NAPIER,—I am obliged to you for letting me know by the return of post the particulars of your journey to Lainshaw. I am sorry it has not been more agreeable; but still there is reason to be thankful, because it might have been worse. I hope by this time the painful effects occasioned by the disagreeable occurrences you met with on the road are well over: and that

* Miss Ritchie (now Mrs. Mortimer) was long an intimate friend and correspondent of the late Rev. John Wesley. At his request, she first wrote to Lady Maxwell, and an interchange of letters was kept up for several years, though they never enjoyed a personal interview. She has survived most of her early religious associates; remains a steady member of the Wesleyan society, and is "rejoicing in hope of the glory of God."

you find yourself happy with your two amiable friends at Dounholm, where you will have much precious time, which you could not command in the metropolis. Your hours, I doubt not, glide softly on; some spent in riding, some in working, and not a few, I hope, in *reading*.

From the knowledge I have of your library, I know your books are much calculated for the improvement of your mind. It gave me satisfaction to see the *select collection* you possess; I hope you will reap much benefit from a *serious* perusal of them. In vain do we look for happiness from the things and persons around us. They may amuse a little in the time of health and prosperity, but can yield no solid comfort in a dark and melancholy hour. But in every situation those hours we spend in conversing with God and our own heart, will prove consolatory seasons: too many live strangers to both: therefore they are *miserable*. Happy those, whose minds are divinely illuminated to see, and whose wills are happily determined to choose, that *better part* which shall never be taken from them. They possess peace and joy unspeakable: they rise superior to all the ills of human life, and with a holy indifference view the smiles and frowns of a vain world. Fixed upon the *Rock of ages*, they remain unmoved. Every event of providence, whether joyous or adverse, with which they are exercised in this vale of tears, is by the intervention of a divine agency overruled for their *good*. In all things they are guided by the unerring counsel of the Most High in time; and by his grace prepared for everlasting happiness in eternity. Happy people! Who would not be a Christian?

I know my young friend desires to be *one*; therefore, as I wish her happy, I would entreat her to be *in earnest*: to spend much time in reading the sacred oracles of truth, and in breathing fervent petitions to Heaven that she may not be permitted to rest short of a thorough *change of heart*, of a vital union of soul with the Lord Jesus Christ. *This, only this*, can lay a scriptural foundation for present peace, or future felicity. The world, the devil, and our own heart oppose this great work with all their might: therefore, it is necessary that we put forth *all* our strength; while, at the same time, we have no dependence, but on the free mercy of God through a Redeemer. I hope you will take all this in good part, as you know my motive; and believe me, dear Miss Napier,

Your real friend, &c., &c., &c.,

D. M.

TO LADY H. HOPE.

Saughton-hall, December 25, 1781.

Many, very many are the prayers that are put up this day to the Hearer of prayer by real Christians because, as it is thought,

on this memorable day a Child was born, a Son was given. Though we cannot exactly fix the precise time when this glorious event took place, yet we are sure there was a day when it happened, and therefore we are safe in remembering it: not, indeed, as too many do, in rioting and wantonness; but in prayer, praise, and thanksgiving. O what unnumbered benefits accompany and flow from this unspeakable gift to a lost world! How many have *we*, even *we*, experienced! If we endeavour to reckon them we cannot; they are more in number than the hairs of our head. O that by our lives we may be enabled to testify our gratitude; and may every revolving season increase our power of so doing.

Upon a retrospective view of the past year, what cause have we to praise our God for spiritual and temporal mercies. How many trials has he brought us through? How many troubles has he supported us under, and delivered us from? How many snares has he broken that were laid for us by the adversary of our souls, when he poured in as a flood? How often has he lifted up a standard for us? How frequently has he disappointed our fears and been better to us than our expectations? How often has he revived and comforted our souls in public and private; and, when in perplexity, made our way plain before us? Surely we have reason to say, "He hath done all things well:" he is the God that performeth all things for us. But what returns have been made for all this profusion of goodness? Alas, we have too much cause to lay our hands upon our mouths, and our mouths in the dust; to blush and be ashamed, to stand astonished at the long-suffering patience of our God in sparing such cumberers of the ground. O that the time past may suffice wherein we have trifled, and come so far short of the glory of God: through grace may we fly afresh to that sacred Fountain opened for us; there may we wash and be clean, and may the residue of our lives be a continual looking to Jesus, and living by faith upon him. Then, Enochlike, we shall walk sweetly with our God, and experience much of his goodness. So let it be, gracious Lord.

I thought our friend had been quite strong, by the accounts I heard from different quarters. The sweating is a complaint she had the first years of my acquaintance with her, when she was in much better health than now. She told me then that it used to come on in the mornings. If it does so now, perhaps getting up might prevent it. May the Lord order all well that concerns her. Give her my love and best wishes. You do not say whether your health is tolerable. O that your soul may prosper; cleave to Jesus, and be strong in him; then you will be lively and happy wherever you are. Were you hurt by the question I put in my last? I would not willingly grieve you.

My health is, through mercy, very tolerable; in that respect,

this place has answered well hitherto ; but it has its inconveniences :—my want of a carriage increases them. Did I keep a chaise, I should see you often. And now the God of heaven fill you with himself, and make all grace to abound in you and toward you ; may he be a sun to comfort you, and shine with his beams of grace upon you. Farewell in the Lord.

Ever yours with affection,

D. MAXWELL.

While Lady Maxwell was thus endeavouring to counsel and comfort her afflicted friend, Lady H., she was, in the course of this year, frequently the subject of painful indisposition. But she had learned to practise well those lessons of patient submission and Christian confidence which she so affectionately enforced upon others : firmly believing that every affliction was designed for her good, she fervently prayed that she might receive the intended benefit ; and her diary affords abundant evidence that these prayers were answered. She has also recorded several seasons of severe conflicts with the powers of darkness ; but, in the strength of omnipotent grace, she went on, from conquering to conquer. And, what is worthy of remark, these conflicts and conquests were generally succeeded by peculiar manifestations from God, and by the possession of more than ordinary degrees of happiness. When the Saviour of men had resisted all the wiles of the devil, “ angels came and ministered unto him.” Her diary for this year proves that she experienced a growing deadness to the world ; a deeper consciousness of her own insufficiency ; a firmer reliance upon Christ ; and the most intense desires to devote herself, and all she had, to the glory of God. The following extracts will confirm these remarks :—

“ December 22. My enemies often threaten and attempt to disturb my peace, but are not permitted, because the Lord rebukes them. I am kept very conscious of my weakness, which prevents all confidence in the flesh, and leads me to live by faith, and constantly to look to the Strong for strength. Jesus is the only foundation for present comfort or future felicity. I have little of the mind that was in him, in comparison with what is my privilege. I am much stripped of confidence or complacency in *self*. In spite of temptations and weakness, when an opportunity offers for confessing God, I feel sensibly strengthened and imboldened ; and the Lord often makes my attempts useful to others, and comfortable to myself. How wonderful are his ways ; but still the path of duty in some things remains uncertain.

“ — 29. I still have cause to bless God for his goodness to me. Since the 14th, he has blessed me with spiritual and temporal mercies. I desire to record his loving kindness, for, alas ! without this, how prone am I to lose the lively sense of his goodness. I can truly say, my communion is with the Father and with the Son. How delightful the prospect of being soon for

ever with the Lord. O what must be the full fruition of that beatific vision.

“—— 31. Upon a review of this year, though I have reason to lament my progress has been small, my improvement almost undiscernible ; yet, after desiring that the Lord would search me, I have great cause to sing of mercy, and to stand amazed at the goodness of the Lord. Not only because he hath spared me, but for supporting me under many afflictions, comforting me in many distresses, delivering me from many severe inward conflicts, and for refreshing me with the sweet consolations of his Holy Spirit. He has lifted me above my spiritual foes, which were at times ready to devour me ; and in temporal distresses has repeatedly wrought out deliverances for me when I had reason to fear lest I should grieve his Spirit by taking too much thought about them. I trust I can say he knew that my intentions were right ; but I erred in having too little faith ; and, Marthalike, was cumbered with what I ought to have committed to the Lord. O the long suffering of divine patience. O the depth of redeeming love. I have cause to say, ‘ Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless his holy name.’ ”

CHAPTER XVII.—1782.

Correspondence with Lady Hope—Diary continued.

TO LADY H. HOPE.

January 11, 1782.

I RECEIVED my dear daughter's note with the enclosed, and would sooner have acknowledged it, but have hardly been able till this day. I had much bodily indisposition when at B——n, and have suffered much more since ; yet in spite of both I had no cause to regret my being there ; having had a remarkable display of the goodness of my God, and such a striking proof of his being the hearer of prayer, as led me, in my way home, though unwell, to magnify the Lord, and to rejoice in him as the God of my salvation : and though, since, I have been partly confined to bed, and brought low in body by pain and sickness, yet a sweet savour of it remains on my mind. In the night seasons the Lord made his word the food of my soul ; sleeping and waking it filled my mind ; and to-day, through mercy, my pain is much abated, and I feel much disposed to abide in prayer for myself and friends. The Lord appeared willing to grant all I asked. O the depth of divine love ! Surely if I were not to praise the Lord, the very stones of the field might cry out against me. I feel weak and helpless in myself, but see an ocean of

love and goodness in God and in Christ, to which I am welcome to have constant recourse, and out of that fulness to receive by faith *all* I stand in need of. O for power to improve to the *utmost* the rich privileges to which, as believers, we are entitled. And, O for power to live more to God! I seem as a mere dwarf in religion, swimming upon the surface instead of sinking into all the depths of humble love, and rising up to all the life of God. May the Lord make us all more in earnest! I write freely, knowing that neither *matter* nor *motive* will be mistaken. May you, and our friend, experience a remarkable increase of every grace of the Holy Spirit, prays

Your affectionate parent in Jesus,

D. M.

TO LADY H. HOPE.

Saughton-hall, Friday afternoon, Jan. 25, 1782.

As it was late before your servant called, I did not like to detain him, and therefore sent only a verbal return to your kind inquiries. I write now, hoping you will get this to-morrow.

I am sorry you should be alone, and that I am confined at home, indeed mostly to my chamber. I am, through mercy, much better, but still feel a soreness in my throat, and have a small degree of cough: and the weather, at present, is so severe that, without some care, I am afraid of longer confinement.

I cannot think of your going abroad in this stormy weather: do not risk coming here till it is milder. The Lord, I trust, will be with you, and supply your every want. May you have sweet access to a throne of grace through the blood of sprinkling; a power to roll your every burden upon the Lord, and find him so sustaining you as to prevent your being moved: then your hours will pass sweetly on. May Jesus converse with you: and, as the PRINCE of *life*, increase your *life*; and, as the Prince of peace, cause your peace to flow as a river. O what blessings are you entitled to, through your union with him! Peace of conscience, joy in the Holy Ghost, increase of grace, perseverance therein unto the end! These are a few of them, but who can tell them all! And, in eternity, when pain, and sorrow, and sin are done away, what glorious things await you! O dwell on these things, that the high praises of your God may continually be in your mouth, and his love in your heart; then will your every moment be devoted to him.

He, in tender love, often tries you with pains and weakness; but the rod is gentle. He means you to come more purified out of every furnace, and, as the burning bush, to flourish unconsumed in fire. I am glad you are better both in body and mind. Be strong, and the Lord will strength afford. *Fear* is your besetting weakness; strive against it; it is very hurtful to the soul. When low, and tempted to distrust, O *fly* then close to

Jesus, and he will cover you from your foes, and keep you as in the hollow of his hand! His tenderness and kindness to his people are more than we can conceive. O Jesus, what in thy love possess we not! Cast all your cares upon him; spread all your wants before him; and he will guide and comfort you here, and fix you at last in never ending joys, unspeakable and full of glory.

I hope Lady G. will not be long from you, nor suffer by her labour of love to the old man. May the Lord give him his soul for a prey! May we improve to the utmost the years, months, or days, that shall yet be allowed us, and at last have an abundant entrance ministered unto us into the everlasting kingdom of our God and Saviour. Till then I remain my dear daughter's affectionate parent in the Lord,
D. M.

TO LADY H. HOPE.

March 16, 1782.

From my feelings, both asleep and awake, for some time past I suspected my dear daughter was not well, either in body or mind, or both; and her letter of yesterday confirms my suspicions.

What a mercy that all our trials, in soul and body, are under the direction of a God of love, the Father of our beloved Saviour, in whom we are, through abounding mercy, accepted. We have reason, then, to trust all shall be overruled for our good, however in the meantime painful, if we are not giving way to any thing contrary to the world and will of God. We cannot cleave too closely to Christ, nor believe too firmly upon him, nor expect too much from him. "If our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God." But the prevalence of *temptation*, as well as *sin*, will weaken this confidence: and it is highly needful, for our own peace, to advert to this circumstance. They *err* greatly who make either *duties* or *frames* the *foundation* of their acceptance with God: yet the former is indispensably necessary, and the latter is very desirable—is our privilege, and is also *evidential* of a thriving soul. Many of the children of God sink into a careless and supine spirit by paying too little regard to their frames, when, perhaps, they only desire to be preserved from building upon them: hereby Satan lays a snare for them, which they fall into unawares. But from this my dear daughter, I trust, will be saved, and from every other a snare of the enemy, and thus be kept by the power of God, through faith, unto full salvation. Nervous complaints much depress the mind.

I had intended to be out at this time, but a new cold, and the severity of the weather, have made me unwillingly give up the thoughts of it: from your situation I should be thoughtful whether it be proper for you either; this is a very trying month.

May the Lord direct you! and, whether at home or abroad, may he enliven and refresh you with the smiles of his reconciled countenance.

I have hopes that the Lord has heard my repeated cries to him for a proper teacher. When I have more time and health, will give you particulars. *Fear not*, all will be well. So hopes, so believes, so prays, my dear daughter,

Your ever affectionate parent in the Lord,

D. M.

TO LADY H HOPE.

March 29, 1782.

My last was sealed and sent to town before your servant called. I see by your short letter you are in heaviness through manifold temptations. As to your apprehensions about Lady G. I believe it is a device of Satan to distress you, and think you should strive against it.* But as nothing happens to the children of God, whether joyous or grievous, but from which he means they should reap benefit—it might turn out to your spiritual advantage if you would carry it frequently to the Lord, and endeavour to plead *earnestly* that the *end* he has in view, by permitting it, may be *fully* answered. This might be the means of your obtaining entire victory, if it be a temptation: and supposing the worst, still this is the best way to get the mind comforted, fortified, and sweetly reconciled to the divine will. O what cannot the power of grace effect in the human heart! It can make us even *rejoice* to give up our Isaacs when called to it. Believe this firmly, and then you will so trust in the Lord as not to be afraid of evil tidings; your heart will be fixed. We should be much aware of anticipating evil, it is fraught with many hurtful consequences; it embitters present enjoyments; it weakens faith, love, trust; it grieves the Holy Spirit, nourishes unbelief, and leads to discontent. Do you not remember how strongly you were tempted, some years ago, to believe your own death was at hand? the impression, you said, was strong, but you said afterward that it was only temptation. If we have a friend that we can trust, it is of great use to mention our temptations; this is often, by the blessing of the Lord, made the means of breaking their power. I know this by experience. May you prove it so at present!

Your affectionate parent,

D. M.

The following extracts from the diary will enable the reader to form a proper estimate of the state of her ladyship's mind and heart at the close of this year:—

“September 25. In the course of these last two weeks I have felt variously. I have, at times, had seasons of refreshing;

* A fear that her friend was about to be removed by death.

sweet proofs that God is the hearer of prayer. I have had strong desires after entire devotedness of heart and life to God; have been drawn out to plead for the full accomplishment of the promises in my own soul, with much longing for that happy time; and have waited for it with a degree of fainting, because so long deferred. I have thought, surely the promises of a faithful God cannot fail; yet, wherefore is it so long before he appears in my behalf? I have feared lest I had any sinful hand in it, and have been grieved because I seem to live to so little purpose; doing so little for God, for others, or for myself. I have hoped that every returning day would make a happy change. I have been happy when any opportunity was put in my power of doing good, and rejoiced as one that found great spoil: though even herein, upon a strict scrutiny, I have been very unfaithful. In short, I am a mystery to myself; and were it not that I have the express promise of a faithful God, on which to depend for a great increase in my own soul and for an *enlarged sphere of usefulness*, I should almost despair of things being better with me than they are at present. But surely the heavens and the earth shall sooner fail than one word that he hath spoken fall to the ground. Lord, I believe; help thou my unbelief.

“October 11. Still I have much cause to say, ‘My leanness, my leanness.’ Yet, I must also say, I have much cause to record the loving kindness of the Lord. Since my last date, my visits from on high have been more frequent. I have felt more sweetness flowing from a sense of the presence of Christ, who has been very near and precious. O were he always thus with me, heaven, in one sense, would be complete! He is my all in all. The Lord has greatly enlarged my sphere of usefulness in a way I did not expect; and at first I felt a degree of reluctance, fearing my unfaithfulness: but I am now sweetly reconciled to it, and have cause to praise the Lord, who has strengthened me to do what he called me to, and what I feared. O for a grateful heart! He gives me also to feel, in the present case, that the way of duty is the way not only of safety, but of comfort and strength. He does all things well. He has laid his hand gently upon my body, and again removed the rod, and disappointed my fears. He has also refreshed my spirits by good accounts from afar; from a very particular friend, who, I hope, has been his mouth to me. Lord, thou knowest I would not willingly mistake the way in which thou wouldst have me to walk. I look to thee to confirm this matter to me, that I may rest assured I am doing what is well pleasing to thee. I have this day, (Friday,) as usual, renewed my engagements to be the Lord’s; though not with all that life and joy I aim at, yet with more sweetness than usual. I feel strong desires to live up to them, to the very utmost; and this for the sake of others, as well as myself. Lord, do thou enable me to be faithful.

“ — 25. Still, because my God is good, I experience in a measure his loving kindness. In the course of these two weeks he has been gracious to me in various ways : he has carried me through trials ; strengthened me for doing and suffering his will ; made me feel more profit and comfort from the word preached than for some time before ; given me to experience more emptiness in the creature than usual ; and also made me willing it should be so, if he saw meet, provided I might enjoy a proportionable sweetness in himself. He has strengthened my body to undergo more fatigue than usual, without being hurt by it. He has made me also to feel how good it is for me to make all my wants known to him by prayer ; with all my hopes, fears, and desires ; for I keep nothing from my God. He more and more leads me in this way, and I praise him for it. O the privilege of prayer ! He also tenderly warns me when danger is near, and causes me to cry to himself.

“ November 9. I again take up my pen to testify of the goodness of my God. Since my last date he has given refreshing seasons, sometimes in public, sometimes in secret, and sensibly assisted me in family duties. He has permitted me to be brought into many difficulties, in order to show his power in supporting me under them, and his goodness in delivering me from them. I have met with most unexpected trials within these two weeks, and have been driven, in some measure, into extremity ; but this hath been the Lord’s opportunity. I cried unto him, and he kept my mind stayed upon himself. In the midst of various trials he has made me sit calm on tumult’s wheel. From the comfort I felt, I doubted trials were at hand : it proved so, but I also proved the Lord a strong hold in the day of trouble. Nature *felt* and *suffered*, but grace *sustained* the conflict. He gave me to feel composure, serenity, and comfort in his house of prayer. O that it may be a prelude to greater enjoyments ! But he makes me more and more sensible I am nothing, and have nothing but what he bestows ; and this keeps me dependent upon himself, for which I praise him. He also still shows me what I lack, but surrounds me with promises for all I can stand in need of. I will extol thee, O God, my King, for ever and ever : while I have a being I will praise my God.

“ — 21. *Gardiner’s-hall*. I left *Saughton-hall* the 14th, a place where the Lord permitted me to be tried with great and sore inward conflicts, but out of which he also, in a great measure, delivered me ; a place wherein he gave me, in much mercy, to know him times without number as a God that heareth prayer, both for myself and others. He also afforded frequent opportunities of attempting to do good to others, by having the gospel preached in my house, by the distribution of religious tracts among the people, and by conversing with many individuals upon the concerns of their immortal souls. However feeble the

attempts, if the Lord give his blessing, they shall not be in vain. Saughton-hall was a place to which I was much attached, but when the Lord called me to leave it he enabled me cheerfully to give it up, and perhaps I may see more clearly afterward his reasons for calling me out of it: at present, I am satisfied with my situation. His presence constitutes my heaven in every place. May he enable me to love him more and serve him better in this place than ever I have yet done. Then I shall indeed have reason to praise him for the change. I have much cause to bless him for carrying me through much hurry, fatigue, and a variety of scenes, without suffering by it; and for giving me, since I came here, health of body, intercourse with his people, the privilege of repeatedly entering his house of prayer, and also some opportunities of acting for him, though my spiritual comforts have not been so great.

"December 19. (Friday.) Words fail to express my obligations to the Lord. Since Wednesday, last week, I have had gracious seasons, both when alone and when with others. When Jesus smiles, my heaven is begun; and of late he has been present and precious. He is the sacred source from whence spring my chief joys. I long to prove his utmost salvation, and fulness of love; to be lost in that ocean of love that neither knows bottom nor shore.

"— 22. This also has been a precious day. My fellowship has been with the Father and the Son from morning to night. I have felt wrapped up in Jesus, and proved him such a source of calm repose as I cannot easily express. How poor and trifling does all created good appear when thus highly favoured of God! He in mercy keeps me keenly sensible of my weakness, while he lets me feel where my strength lies, and makes me aware of my danger. As it respects *spiritual pride*, my soul trembles at the thought. I fly to the feet of Jesus, and there I am safe."

CHAPTER XVIII.—1783.

Diary and correspondence continued.

January 3. My God has seen meet to conduct me to the beginning of a new year, and with an unusual measure of bodily health. I was enabled to wait upon him in public very late on the last night of the last year, and early on the first day of this; neither of which I had been privileged to do for many years. A painful languor has rested on my mind for some little time. I have no condemnation, but experience a keen conviction of my want of more spiritual life. I see and feel the necessity of drawing near to God. Indeed he has so moulded my spirit that, if I do not enjoy comfort in him, I cannot find it in any thing else. Long

since he inclined me to flee from the world lest I should be hurt by it, and also because I had no relish for it ; so that I am thankful to say I have no proper source of comfort but in himself. When, therefore, I feel at a distance from him, I am all an aching void, and am entirely out of my element. I also grieve from day to day that my sphere of usefulness remains so contracted. My desires to act for God are constant and vigorous ; and his promises for this are many and extensive ; but "hope deferred maketh the heart sick." The aspect of providence has long in this respect appeared to oppose my wishes and expectations ; hence arises my grief : but I would chide my unbelief. Surely the promises of a faithful God shall not, cannot fail. Upon a review of the last year, I perceive this has been my complaint during the whole of it ; yet I trust I have been kept thirsting after all the life of God, and for the full accomplishment of all the precious promises he has given in my behalf. Hasten, Lord, the happy time.

— 22. I have lately been favoured with a more ardent spirit of prayer than almost ever formerly : my whole soul seemed to struggle into God, and to pant keenly after the full accomplishment of the promises. I was in great hopes that the time to favour me was come ; for I felt as though I could not live at such a distance from God ; was made astonished and ashamed at my past unfaithfulness and unprofitableness, and amazed that the Lord had borne with me so long. For some days past this keen edge has been blunted, and is succeeded by a degree of languor. My constant desire is, for the full enjoyment of the blessing of sanctification ; and I would always be at a throne of grace ; but when there I do not enjoy that spirit of fervent supplication as lately ; nay, all my kindling ardours die away, and I remain uneasy and restless. O to enter into a permanent rest, where all is light, life, and power ! O to be all praise, all love, and all activity ! My desires after more extensive usefulness continue, and recently the Lord favoured me with new opportunities, and afforded me power to embrace them. I feel the will of my God to be precious, and desire in all things to be conformed to it.

February 14. I have had a small revival, but it does not prove lasting. On Monday evening my heart was softened, my mind serene, and a degree of sweetness was diffused throughout my soul. The following day this increased ; and the Lord showed me clearly the state of my soul, and convinced me that part of my suffering had arisen from a partial ignorance respecting it. While I painfully thought the work of grace was at a stand, the Lord was in fact carrying it on, though not in that joyous way I wished ; but by giving me a general and constant view of the shortness of time and the infinite value of eternity, thereby making all earthly and transient things appear very poor

and little indeed. This is an important lesson. O that I may learn it fully ! then all other things will be easily set right.

— 28. Still I have cause to complain ; still I am far from possessing that degree of spiritual life, which I know to be my privilege. Since my last I have enjoyed tastes of the goodness of God, but they were too short to satisfy. I have felt a sensible increase of hungering after the whole image of God ; the want of a full possession of this has pained my inmost soul : but I am again in a measure sinking from this ardour, and it is succeeded by a degree of languor which alarms me. When shall I be all I wish ! Secret prayer is the means from which I derive the greatest benefit at present. I do indeed prove this to be a special privilege ; I could not live without it, though I do not always find comfort in it. I still ardently desire an enlarged sphere of usefulness, and find it comfortable to embrace the opportunities afforded me, though alas ! I am not so faithful herein as I ought to be. O what great things hath God promised and prepared for his children even here ! Why should I come so far short ?

March 12. I would with gratitude acknowledge the goodness of my God, who, for the last two weeks, has given me more reason than for some time to conclude that he is carrying on his work in my soul, and with much freedom from painful temptation and inward conflicts. He has, with the return of spring, given me a fresh spring of heavenly affections ; sweetly alluring me to himself, and constraining me to yield up all the affectionate powers of my heart to him, with whom true joys abound. *There* I would centre all my happiness ; from that sacred source I would draw all my consolation. I have been favoured with the sweet and sensible presence of my God, especially this last week, both in public and private, but particularly in secret prayer. In the house of God, my views of a happy eternity have been truly delightful. For about two hours last week, I felt most keenly, from a fear that I had grieved the Spirit of God ; but the Lord in mercy removed my distress, and comforted me. He shows me that my works are not perfect ; clearly sets before me how much more closely I may walk with him : how much more glory I may bring to him ; and if I can judge of the feelings of my heart, I should esteem it my richest privilege to give him each precious moment as it flies, and to prove the utmost power of transforming grace.

— 14. Still my God is good. Last night, in the chapel, it was indeed a time of love. God the Father and Son drew near ; surrounded me with their peaceful presence, and filled my soul—not with rapturous joy, but with a silent heaven of love. The divine attraction felt so strong that, like the concentrated rays of the sun, my every power and faculty seemed united and fixed on God. I felt sweetly sinking into him, and enjoyed most delightful and extensive views of holiness. I experience to-day.

as one blessed effect of this heavenly visitation, an increasing power to take up my cross, to deny myself, and to follow the Lord.

— 26. This morning, while I was conversing with some persons that love God, Jesus drew near, and filled my soul with surprise. When he is nigh, sorrow and care fly far away. Throughout the day he, at different times, appeared to the eye of my faith as altogether lovely: yet my enemies pushed hard at me, and one temptation for some time prevailed. But O, with what desire did I breathe after pure and perfect love: that Jesus might more fully possess my heart, and felt willing to part with all for this. For some time my hungering and thirsting after entire devotedness to God have been abundantly increased; yet I have also felt depressed with a sense of my unprofitableness. O that the Lord would enlarge my sphere of usefulness. I long to be active for God, and useful to my fellow creatures. I have the promise of a faithful God for this; but the time seems long delayed. O that now he would do as he hath spoken.

May 23. *Coates*. Having obtained help of God, I continue to this day, witnessing that he is good. Since my last date I have had severe and unexpected trials, but the Lord has brought me through. O that I could add, with glory to his name, and with profit to my own soul: but, alas! herein I am still defective. I have also enjoyed many mercies. O that I could say they produced all that warmth of gratitude they were calculated to do; but herein also I greatly fail. In very many respects I am a wonder to myself. When will my complainings cease? I am weary of them. When shall I be all love and all praise? The Lord brought me to this place on the 16th instant, through many difficulties: it has been mostly a season of trial ever since, yet mingled with many mercies. At Gardiner's house, from whence I came, I had much cause to speak of the goodness of the Lord; and here also I expect his tender mercies will follow me. O that I may be endued with power to glorify *him*, however it may fare with *me*.

June 6. Since my last date, the Lord has appeared remarkably in my behalf, and has wrought out for me a great temporal deliverance. His goodness astonished me; and his faithfulness, which shone conspicuously in this affair, confirms my trust in him for future mercies: but yet this *lively sense* of his kindness does not prove so lasting as it ought. O, I much need more grace! For some weeks past I have been harassed with worldly matters, which have occupied much of my time, and I fear injured my mind; at least, damped my spiritual ardour. I hope the bustle is now nearly over. O that I may a thousand times more than ever *centre in God*; feel calm repose in the bosom and blood of Jesus, and be all for JEHOVAH.

— 13. My soul is made very desirous of an enlarged

sphere of action for God : the language of my heart is, *What shall I do for God?* I have cried to him repeatedly, that he would put some work in my hand, and I think he has pointed out one or two ways wherein I may be of some use to his cause and people. He has given me strong convictions, since I came here, of the shortness and uncertainty of time—of the unsatisfactory nature of all sublunary good—of the great propriety of using all for him—and of my doing as much as possible during my short life for his cause. May his grace enable me to reduce these lessons to practice : may I enjoy more of his love in my heart. He has in mercy lately warned me of danger where I was not suspecting any ; and stimulated me to cry to him to be preserved from whatever would grieve his Spirit, or in the least injure my own soul.

While Lady Maxwell was thus intensely desiring an enlarged sphere of usefulness for herself, she continued to stimulate her friends to go forward with their works of faith and labours of love. The following letters must not be omitted :—

TO LADY H. HOPE.

Coates, June 19, 1783.

I had both my dear daughter's letters, and would have answered the first sooner, but have had people staying in my house for some days, to whom I gave a good deal of my time, fondly hoping it might be of some use to them. Besides, I have not been so well for the last two weeks, and on Sunday was only out about two hours to the West Church, which was a time of refreshing. Mr. Jones and Mr. Groves were no small addition ; both seemed alive, and in general it appeared to be a good time. I hope Mr. G. will be of use at Edinburgh ; multitudes attend his preaching. He was with me yesterday, when we had some profitable conversation. O that the Lord would give a fresh commission to many of his ministering servants ; that his word may run and have free course, that multitudes may fall down under the power of it, and our God be glorified, from the rising to the setting sun. How desirable is it to be in any way instrumental in promoting this great work. Time is flying, men are dying, and eternity hastens on. This is not our rest, we must not expect it here ; let us then be willing to embrace every inconvenience the Lord may see meet to lay in our way ; let us live as pilgrims, hastening home to our glorious rest, and endeavouring to take as many with us as we can. We have hitherto lived at a poor dying rate, much beneath our privileges ; let the time past more than suffice ; let us now arise and lay aside every weight, look continually to Jesus, and live by faith upon him, and we shall find wonders done in his holy name both for ourselves and others.

I am glad Lady G. is getting better ; I hope the Lord has much to do for her, and with her, before she takes possession of that inheritance that fadeth not away. With my love, tell her I had all her letters, and lost no time in doing what she wished me ; but the person she mentioned was gone out of town, not to return till this night, when I hope to give him the information she desired ; and on Monday I hope to be able to give her some account of the matter. - Mrs. N. is much as usual, rather stirred up by Mr. G. Scarlet fevers are prevailing in town, and a putrid one at Dunbar ; but when will the inhabitants learn righteousness !

I wish I could provide you with a proper maid, but it is a difficult matter ; you have my prayers for it, and if I hear of one, will let you know. *Prayer* can procure every thing that is for our good. O what cause of thankfulness is it that we have a gracious God to go to on all occasions. Use and enjoy this privilege, and you can never be miserable. You want more faith ; cry mightily for it, and stir up the gift of God that is in you, and let not the power of temptation obscure that comfortable light it is the will of God you should walk in, or weaken that strength of which you are possessed in virtue of your union with the Lord of life and glory. May the Lord set you free, and keep you so, and enable you more than ever to spend and be spent in his cause. So prays, my dear daughter,

Your affectionate parent,

D. M.

TO LADY H. HOPE.

Coates, July 8, 1783.

How is my dear daughter since she arrived at Moffat ? May I hope better both in body and mind ? It is surely a great evil to think more highly of ourselves than we ought to think ; but I judge it is also a loss not to form a *just* estimate of ourselves. It is the opinion of one of our English poets, that the part we act in life bears an exact proportion to the judgment we form of ourselves ; that we never shall attempt any thing great, either for God or man, if we think very meanly of ourselves. This sentiment, though it came from the pen of a man that I believe had no religion, yet, properly qualified, is truth. In *one sense* we cannot think too meanly of ourselves, but in another I think we may ; and I believe the adversary of souls has a hand in it— for while he persuades us that we are so poor and despicable we can do nothing ; he means thereby to cut asunder the very sinews of our active endeavours for the glory of God, and the good of our fellow creatures. This is a *very subtle* device of Satan ; by it many strong ones are rendered weak and kept useless all their days, when by nature and grace they are formed for extensive usefulness. May the Lord shine into your soul, and give you to know the things that are freely given you of

God, and enable you to use them *all* to his glory, the good of your fellow creatures, and the comfort of your own soul. I know this is the habitual desire of your heart.

Is there any way which occurs to your mind for the promoting of any or all of these, in which you could take a more *active part* than you have hitherto done? I think it would be of use to you. Your nerves and spirits are, I think, very weak at present; see that you do *all* you can in your present situation for strengthening them. O get free from *unnecessary* cares, and from taking too great a weight of even *necessary* ones. Fear nothing; neither persons, places, nor things. It is our privilege to have but *one desire*—that is, to please God; and but *one fear*—lest we should offend him. This brings much sweet liberty into the soul. May you feel it so!

I shall be glad to hear soon from you, with many particulars about yourself, and our dear friend, and also of Lady J. Many thanks for the bottle you sent me. I am much as when you saw me. I wrote Lady G. last night, but forgot to give her my address. Most people continue my old one, *Princess-street*, and my letters always come safe. In every place and situation I continue, my dear daughter,

Your affectionate parent,

D. M.

TO LADY H. HOPE.

Coates, July 24, 1783.

My dear daughter's letter of the 16th I did not receive till the 23d, owing to Miss N.'s being out of town. I began to fear that either Lady G. or you was not well. Both letters were most acceptable and agreeable. By your desire I write soon. I am glad the visits you mention are over, and the hurry and agitation occasioned by them subsiding. I would almost say it is a great mercy when we are hurt by worldly company, (I do not mean sinfully so;) it is a great preservative against mixing too much with it, and a loud call to avoid it, as much as is consistent with the will of God and our duty.

I perceive, by your letter, that you are suffering both in body and mind from different causes; some of which have often proved a source of distress to you. O that the Lord would teach you to depend more upon himself, and to be less attached to the creature. Indeed, it is your privilege to be free and disentangled from *all*, to give them all up to God, and to *leave* them *there*. This will secure to you the true enjoyment of them; but this victory the power of sovereign grace alone can give, and it is more difficult to some tempers than others. The more you love God the more easy you will find it to trust him with whatever is dearest to you, whether persons or things; and the greater degree of sweet liberty you feel in your own soul.

There is nothing so hurtful to the nervous system as anxiety;

it preys upon the vitals, and weakens the whole frame; and, what is worse than all, it grieves the Holy Spirit. But I hope you will be made conqueror over that, and every other foe, and prove God's utmost salvation and fulness of love: then you will find "where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty:" then you will be better able to commit not only your own way, but the way of those you love, unto the Lord, and to trust in him that he will bring it to pass: then you will see cause to praise him, when he has wrought that work that caused your needless fears. I feel inclined to say, "O thou of little faith, wherefore dost thou doubt?" Wherefore dost thou fear from day to day, for thyself and others, and where is there any just cause for fear? "The Lord God Omnipotent *reigneth*," and this God is your God, and the God of your dear friend, and he will be the guide of both, even unto death. His faithfulness is a constant shield and buckler to both: you may have access every moment for counsel and direction from him, and you are surrounded with his promises for time and eternity. You have no views in life but to glorify God and to enjoy him; how then can you entertain one shadow of a doubt that the Lord will not shine upon your path, and lead you into his holy will? O, my dear madam, see your privileges, and live up to them, and say, with the poet,—

"Away, my unbelieving fears,
Fear shall no more in me have place."

When the Lord answers *our prayers* he often thwarts *our inclinations*, and by leading us into *all his* holy will he most frequently crosses *our own*. But these are sacrifices he expects we will offer up to him. All Lady G.'s exercises will, I trust, terminate, as you and I could wish, in her own good and that of others. You may assist her much by your prayers, your counsel, and your ready and cheerful acquiescence in whatever she has reason to believe is the will of God concerning her. I rejoice in the good accounts from London. O that the work of the Lord may increase in all places; may his kingdom come, and his will be done; and may we be permitted, and honoured, to throw in our mite also; may all we have, and are, be devoted to God. How does Lady I. go on? Believe me ever

Your affectionate parent,

D. M.

The Lord had important work in reversion for his pious hand-maid, and he was now gradually preparing her to engage in it with all the spiritual ardour of a primitive Christian. The intensity of desire breathed forth in many of the following extracts, and the victorious faith manifested throughout until she received "the accomplishment of the promises," are truly remarkable.

"July 27. Since the 13th, I have experienced a small increase; a keener edge upon my spirit; a sharper appetite for

spiritual food ; a greater standing alone with God ; a fuller emptying of created good ; a deeper conviction of the shortness of time, and the awful importance of eternity ; with an increase of love to God, sweetness in duty, and more ardent desires to be wholly employed for him. Still my God continues his goodness to me with regard to secret prayer, allowing me liberty to pour out all my heart to him, to cast all my cares upon him, and to spread all my wants before him. How very often do I prove him to be a God that heareth prayer. I have been lately favoured with some precious instances of this ; of his care over me in preserving me in the time of danger, and in providing for my safety when I thought not of it.

“Sept. 12. Upon a strict review of what has passed within and without during the last month, I have cause to record the goodness of my God in very many respects ; yet my comforts have run in so low a channel that I seem to have but little to say. One thing I must observe, that, if spiritual consolations have been small, inward conflicts and outward trials have also been few. I have felt a keener edge upon my spirit, strong desires after all the life of God, and for power to glorify him in a more active and useful way. He has enabled me to be much in prayer for the accomplishment of the promises, though with little comfort : yet at times I have been brought into extremity ; seeing all outward helps failing ; no opening in providence for extensive usefulness ; no immediate answers to prayer in respect to this particular. Beside the removal of those that were helpful to me by prayer and conference, some to Abraham’s bosom, others turned seemingly aside,—all these things appear against me, and tend to discourage me ; so that at times I have been sorely perplexed. Yet in the midst of these trials I have been upheld by an almighty power, and still hope not one word shall fail of all the good things which God hath promised. Though in a great measure I stand alone, and have done so for some time, I am enabled to believe that the Lord is *able* to make me *stand*, and that he will perfect what concerns me ; though destitute of various helps which I once enjoyed. Even so, Amen.

“October 3. Still my soul is vexed with a partial distance from God : still he delays his coming in the full accomplishment of the promises : still the means of grace are comparatively unprofitable, and at times I feel the fiery darts of Satan. It is an emptying season. Yet the Lord frequently answers my prayers with regard to temporal things, from which I derive encouragement ; but it is spiritual blessings I long for : a healthful soul and a useful life. This God hath promised. And though at present a sable cloud envelopes me, I will still wait, and hope, and believe to the end. O to be all alive to God ; to possess a heart flaming with divine love ; and a life shining with every grace of the Holy Spirit For *these* I would despise crowns

and sceptres. Lord, grant me all I want, for Christ's sake, and I will praise thee in time and through eternity.

Lady M. at this time suffered from a degree of uncertainty respecting the work of grace in her heart. She had not yet publicly professed *entire sanctification*, but at times believed that she enjoyed the blessing : at other seasons she was perplexed with doubts, and was led to fear that those doubts were occasioned by her not humbly declaring " what God had done for her soul." That she might be delivered from this state of uncertainty she solicited an interest in the prayers of her friends.

TO MISS RITCHIE.

October 18, 1783.

I wrote dear Miss Ritchie many months ago, and hope it is not want of health which prevents my having an answer. If entirely convenient, should be glad to be assured of this by her own pen.

For some time past a painful degree of uncertainty has rested upon my experience. I feel afraid of drawing any certain conclusion concerning the present state of my soul : lest, on the one hand, I deny what the Lord has done for me ; or, on the other, presume on what he has not given. On this account I suffer a good deal of distress, and feel much inclined, if you will permit me, to ask the assistance of your prayers in a *particular manner*, that the Lord would cause his heavenly light to shine bright into my soul, and thereby scatter every cloud, and do away all degree of painful doubt ; that I may know the things freely given me of God, and be enabled to give him the glory, and take the comfort to myself. The fiery darts of the enemy I feel at times keenly pointed ; you know, I doubt not, the *sharp distress* these occasion. I trust all I feel is in mercy, and will be overruled for good ; but I long much for deliverance, if agreeable to the divine will. The Lord has given me exceeding great and precious promises for all I can want, both for soul, body, and outward estate, in time and through eternity ; many of which he has accomplished ; but the delay of the rest often proves a source of the most painful sensations. I long to be fully established in God's utmost salvation ; to be firm as a wall of brass, and as an iron pillar strong. Surely this is his will concerning me. Do, then, dear Miss Ritchie, plead earnestly that I may stand perfect and complete in it ; and thereby you will greatly oblige your affectionate friend in the bonds of the gospel,

D. MAXWELL.

Such precaution is highly praiseworthy, and deserves to be imitated by all the people of God. A few more extracts from the diary will conduct to the end of this year :—

"October 29. The Lord hath appeared in my behalf, and sent me help from his holy hill, for which I desire to bless him. Last Saturday he gave me a little reviving in my bondage; and on the succeeding Sabbath I felt his power, tasted his goodness, and proved his faithfulness. While the enemy was attempting to pour in as a flood he lifted up a standard, disarmed Satan of his malicious power, and armed me with divine strength. In spite of all opposition I was enabled to stand still, and see the salvation of God. Since then I have enjoyed more comfort, more sweetness in prayer, and vigorous desires to be all for God. Immediately before this revival I felt *stripped of all*, except a power to call on the Lord; and, indeed, my heart and flesh cried out for the living God; but this was in the absence of every *joyous sensation*. Truly God is good to Israel, and, though at times he may tarry long, he will avenge his own elect who night and day cry unto him.

"November 19. Since my last date I have had seasons of trial and of consolation. Last week was a time of severe temptation. I scarcely knew to which hand to turn; yet, in the midst of all, through mercy, I was enabled to cry mightily to God, and he has heard and sent me deliverance. Yesterday, while conversing with some of his children on religious subjects, he made it a season of refreshing from his presence, both to myself and others. God, the Father and Son, were clear to the eye of my faith; and all within was peace and serenity. This happy frame continued through the day; and, to-day, though much tempted, my God is sensibly with me.

"December 2. This has truly been a precious day; from morning to night my peace has flowed as a river. In conversation, the Lord has suggested profitable matter, and given ability to express it. At times my pen and tongue move freely; at others I feel a total incapacity, and labour under a painful stagnation of thought: this convinces me that the power to use either to purpose comes from the Lord. Indeed the farther I go in the divine life the more conscious I am of my entire dependence upon God; and that it is so, affords me peculiar pleasure. He is daily teaching me more simplicity of spirit; makes me willing to receive all as his unmerited gift; and to call upon him for every thing I need, *as I need it*; and he supplies my wants according to existing exigencies. I perceive I have no stock in myself, on which to depend; every new service demands a fresh supply, and my God is good, and sends me grace to help in the *time of need*. Much of his goodness I have tasted this day, in secret and social prayer, in conversation, and in meditation. The Lord has also lately removed much bodily indisposition. O that health, time, talents, wealth, influence, *all* may be used for him. While my God is thus blessing me, the enemy is very busy, varying his temptations, and applying them most power-

fully where perhaps I am weakest : so that, though happy in God, I have almost trembled for fear of their consequences. My only security is in looking to Jesus ; but here I obtain relief.

— 22. This has also been a precious day. My fellowship has been with the Father and Son from morning to night. I have felt wrapped up in Jesus, and found him such a source of calm repose as I cannot express. How trifling and insignificant does all created good appear when I am thus highly favoured of God. He in mercy keeps me sensible of my weakness, while he lets me know where lies my strength, and makes me aware of spiritual pride : my soul trembles at the thought of that dreadful evil. I fly to the feet of Jesus, and there I am safe.

CHAPTER XIX.—1784.

Diary and correspondence continued.

January 1. Upon a retrospect of the past year, I find my obligations to God are exceedingly great. Many, very many, have been the times of refreshing I have had from him. How many my temporal and spiritual deliverances ! and O, how numerous the answers of prayer with which I have been favoured. My communion with heaven has been sensibly increased : and, times without number, he has made me sensible of the accomplishment of a promise, powerfully impressed on my mind several years ago, that, when I was converted, I should strengthen the brethren. In some temporal affairs he has most wonderfully manifested his goodness in my behalf ; and, on many difficult occasions, strengthened and enabled me to confess him before others. Language fails to express what he has done for me ; indeed it beggars all expression. I will extol thee, O God, and praise thy name for ever and ever : while I have a being I will praise thee. Through the whole of last year I have been kept panting after extensive usefulness, and thankful when any opportunity for doing good was granted me. The Lord has also been very good to me in restraining the power of the enemy : spiritual temptations have neither been so strong nor so numerous as I have found them in former times. This I esteem a great mercy, for of all sufferings and trials they are the keenest.

— 11. (Sunday.) A day much to be remembered. Through difficulties went to Mr. Jones' chapel, where the sacrament was to be dispensed. From the moment I sat down the Lord began to bless me, and many things in the sermon were comfortable ; but on sitting down at the table my communion with the Father and Son was sensibly deepened : I had certainly a foretaste

the heavenly glory. How sweet and near was my fellowship with the Father : God seemed to surround me with his presence. I was permitted to put up many petitions for myself and others, and for the church. I hope they will be answered. Language fails when I would express my gratitude to the Lord. O that my life may express it.

February 6. Since my last date I have been comforted, and also severely tried : I have felt the *rod* of God, whereby nature suffered keenly ; but I have also proved the *staff* of God supporting me. He in great mercy prepared me for suffering by an increase of fellowship with himself. How tenderly does he deal with me ! In the time of a most unexpected trial my Jesus drew near, as if he had said, " Though friends die, I live for ever." Blessed Lord, that is enough. Yet nature feels, animal spirits are weakened, and spiritual temptations have been strong ; but in all my God is good.

— 20. I find my mind for some time past enlarged by the habitual consideration of eternity. These thoughts tend much to rectify the judgment ; and when that is fully instructed the passions are easily adjusted. How contracted are our views while confined within the limits of time. Here there are no objects in any degree adequate to the vast powers and infinite desires of an immortal soul ; but when we contemplate eternity what a boundless prospect presents itself ! What a full scope may we there give to our most extensive views and wishes. There all our holy affections may roam at large, and find abundance of objects perfectly suited in kind and duration to their nature. O my God, in these glorious regions of bliss and peace which the gospel brings to light, may I for ever enjoy thee.

March 4. I have felt very variously in the course of these last thirteen days. At times painfully exercised in my mind, through the prevalence of spiritual temptations, and the remains of unbelief ; these produced keen distress, though, through the goodness of God, it was not permitted to continue long. On Saturday last Jesus drew nigh, rebuked the adversary, disappointed my fears, comforted my soul, and gave me a sweet conviction that God was the hearer of prayer, answering the petitions I offered up to him. But soon after the clouds again gathered, and I was distressed. The enemy renewed his attacks, and, not perceiving the stratagem, I felt painfully fearful that it was myself which obstructed the accomplishment of the promises ; both those which relate to the prosperity of my own soul, and those which refer to extensive usefulness. This caused poignant sorrow, better felt than expressed. The more so now my whole soul is built upon glorifying God, by enjoying him continually in my own soul, and by being active in his cause. But last night I felt a sweet impression on my mind, and from its effects I trust it was from the Lord, that the delay which causes me at times

so much distress was not of myself, but of the Lord; that matters were not yet ripe for the full accomplishment; but that the Lord would in his own time bring to pass in me, and by me, what he has promised. This impression wonderfully calmed my mind, removed my painful fears, and led me to trust in the Lord. That impatience, which bordered upon the haste of unbelief, fled away; I was led to see that I was called to wait patiently, and calmly to hope that what the Lord had said he would do.

May 12. For the last three weeks I have experienced the most intense thirst after an increase of the life of God in my soul, and an enlarged sphere of usefulness. I felt spurred on by strong desire, stimulated by the promises of God, and strengthened to plead by the spirit of prayer. Yet as no opening in providence appeared for the latter, and little or no answer in return to the former, my faith was tried to the uttermost. My heart felt ready to break, for the longing it had after God. It seemed as if I could not live, except my prayers were heard and answered with respect to these two particulars. At length my God, who is rich in mercy, proved it, by condescending to send me an answer last Sabbath from his holy habitation. In the morning I went to church, where the ordinance of the supper was to be administered. The words spoken from were, "Mine eyes have seen thy salvation." The text struck me, and I was led to expect something good, yet found nothing remarkable from the sermon. The enemy was now very busy, and my mind felt uncommonly prone to wander from the point in hand: but if the Most High is determined to arise and work, who can hinder? At his holy table, to which I went much agitated, all my wanderings ceased, and God spake with power to my soul. He condescended to unfold to me the seeming mystery of his late dispensations toward me, both in providence and grace. He told me it was to try my faith, and to prove whether I would continue to follow him through every discouragement, and continue believing his promises, although the aspect of providence contradicted them. He then assured me my faith should prove triumphant, even as the faith of the woman of Canaan, who continued to plead for her daughter in spite of every discouragement. These gracious words brought amazing strength into my soul; I felt determined, with a divine fortitude, to cleave unto the Lord in spite of every opposition; to hope against hope, and patiently to wait upon him till he saw meet to accomplish the promises. This heavenly frame continued through the day, and in the evening, while in the house of prayer, my God renewed his former kindness: O for a power to retain it. How great is his goodness. Surely it is good to wait upon the Lord, and to trust in him. But, lest I should be exalted above measure, the day following I was confined with severe indisposition of body. On Tuesday morning I felt a degree of languor of spirit and confu-

sion of mind which grieved me. Having to meet with a Christian friend or two I prayed much for the presence of the Lord to be with us. He heard my cry, and gave me my petition. He made me very sensible of the approach of Deity. While I sung his praises a reverential consciousness of the divine presence rested on and animated my soul ; God the Father revealed himself to me, and that near and clear view of him has continued with me ever since. How can I sufficiently praise him ; I find, where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty.

— 28. Since the 17th the Lord has supported me under many trials, some of them most unexpected, and which pierced me to the quick. He has given me to feel much, very much, of the insipidity of worldly enjoyment, and caused some creature comforts to prove bitterness to me. Though these things wrung my heart with keen anguish, and brought tears from my eyes, yet I found I could, from my inmost soul, bless God for thus dealing with me, because salutary purposes were answered by the painful dispensations. I thus get farther from the creature, and nearer to God ; convinced he only can make me truly happy. Persons, things, and places are in themselves empty cisterns, which hold no waters of consolation, but as the Lord pours into them. And if I do not rise and keep above them all, they will pierce me through with many sorrows. My God does all things well. O to be faithful to him ! Though thus tried, I have not been left comfortless : the Lord has been good. He still gives me power to hold fast what he has spoken, in spite of Satan and every foe. O that he would come quickly, and do as he has said.

June 27. In the course of these seventeen days I have not experienced any very material change. I have had, at various seasons, an increase of the more immediate presence of God, and Jesus has sweetly attracted my heart and affections by appearing in his native beauty, shining with the milder beams of his mediatorial glory. In him resides the fulness of the Godhead bodily ! Deity in its plenitude of power ! Comfortable, animating thought ! And Jesus is mine. Amazing mercy ! On Sunday week I had an opportunity to sit down at the Lord's table, where I felt my inmost soul pierced with a sense of his goodness. For some days after I was kept praying without ceasing, and was in hopes the time to favour me was come ; but to this succeeded two bitter days of outward and inward trials. On Sunday last, through many difficulties, but with strong desire and great expectation, I entered the house of God. In the former part of the day I was disappointed : in the latter, He whom my soul loveth drew nigh, and I was comforted. Yesterday my soul felt as if drawn from its centre ; my keen relish for divine things was much lessened, and my comfort greatly abated ; yet I was much strengthened to attempt the spiritual benefit of others, by

writing, speaking, and giving away books on divinity. These opportunities of doing good were most unexpected ; but, while thus engaged, the adversary was most assiduous in his attempts to distress ; painful temptation for some time prevailed, but by prayer and faith he was conquered.

October 22. In the course of these seven weeks I have too much given way to temptation, by not writing. Satan has recourse to many stratagems to prevent it. He knows it is profitable, and therefore opposes it. I have much cause to bless the Lord for many mercies, spiritual and temporal. Since my last date I have had sweet seasons, many answers to prayers, and power to attempt doing good, in a way not tried, except twice, since I came here : I mean, having the gospel preached at this place once every week. O that the Lord may smile upon my feeble attempt to glorify him, and give success. My God has been graciously present at my little meeting on Thursday for prayer, praise, and Christian conference ; and in secret and social prayer, has shown much kindness, and given unexpected opportunities of acting for him at home and abroad, and enabled me to exert more power in this way than ever. The issue I leave to him. Upon the whole he has kept my soul in a good measure alive to him ; panting after the accomplishment of the promises ; and daily looking for his coming, to do in me and by me as he has promised. He increases my desire and power to use my substance in the support of his servants and cause : makes me sensible of my danger as to several evils I might fall into ; which causes me to cry to him against them. Secret prayer is more and more profitable and comfortable, and a solemn sense of eternity still rests upon my mind ; with a strong desire to improve time for myself and others. At times the Lord gives me to feel my weakness ; and how quickly I should be swallowed up by my enemies if he did not interpose. This night the Lord disappointed my fears ; when I looked to him he was at hand to help me.

December 8. Since my last date I have had keen inward sufferings ; what are termed the buffetings of Satan. Horror, at times, has taken hold of me. I felt much, but feared more. I feared that I had grieved the Spirit of God, and therefore cried mightily to him that, if this were from an enemy, he would rebuke the adversary, and give freedom from these painful feelings ; but, if from himself, they might continue till every end was answered that was intended by sovereign love. On Sunday last I longed to go to church, expecting relief ; and in the afternoon his servant was a son of consolation. My soul was strengthened and comforted by what I heard. But in the evening, at the chapel, my distress returned. I felt stripped of all : I wished to be searched to the bottom, and appealed to the Lord that I longed to be all he would have me. Jesus drew sweetly nigh,

and comforted me. For some minutes I attempted to examine myself, but all was in confusion. One thing seemed pressed upon my mind, but whether from an enemy I could not say. I gave it up to the Lord, and prayed that he would lead me into his will. On Sunday night and Monday, my mind was burthened : I looked and longed for relief in the means afforded me, but was disappointed. On Tuesday afternoon Jesus again drew nigh and comforted me ; but this did not continue, and again fear returned. Time seemed to fly fast, and still little was done. I felt a poor trifler with God. On Wednesday I was distressed, fearing many things : comfort sprung up in my soul at times, but it did not abide. In the course of some years I have had several attacks of this kind ; sometimes much worse indeed. O that my fears may be disappointed, and that the Lord would give me the thing that I long for ; the accomplishment of all the promises he has given for extensive usefulness and prosperity of soul. I am much discouraged for want of this ; and also, that the attempts I make to do good seem to prove abortive. When, O my God, when shall I have it to say that thou hast fulfilled the desires of my soul, and given me the thing that I looked for ?

Such repeated exercises and deliverances tended greatly to qualify Lady Maxwell to give advice, and to administer consolation to others when tempted or distressed. Thus she again addressed her afflicted, desponding friend :—

TO LADY H. HOPE.

Coates, December 14, 1784

I had not time to answer my dear daughter's note yesterday, but wish to-day to ask how she does, hearing that many of the family have been complaining. In the New Jerusalem *none* shall say they are sick ; but while here, according to the laws of mortality, we must expect to be often pained and distressed both in body and mind. But O what comfort does it afford us to know that "we have not a High Priest that cannot be touched with a feeling of our infirmities : " on the contrary, in *all* our afflictions he is afflicted. An earthly friend may and does feel for us, yet often cannot relieve us ; Jesus, on the contrary, not only sympathizes with us, but supports, upholds, and comforts us : and the very moment that deliverance is proper he gives it. What a strong argument this for entire resignation to every dispensation of providence and grace. O may our hearts at all times sweetly acquiesce in all the holy will of God respecting ourselves and those with whom we stand closely connected ! His smile creates our day :

"In darkest shades if Christ appear,
Our dawning is begun."

I have felt a little of this of late : tried for some days with severe conflicts, the fiery darts of the enemy were keenly pointed. In these very trying seasons we feel what poor helpless creatures we are : how soon we should be utterly destroyed if left to grapple with our spiritual foes in our own strength. O how precious is a Saviour then ! In tender mercy he drew near, rebuked the adversary, and smiled upon me. May he enable us, in every temptation, to look to him and overcome.

My soul strongly breathes after more of his mind and image, and for power to promote his cause and kingdom. I feel but as a babe in him, but do long, night and day, for the strength of a father. O to possess every purchased blessing !

I long also to hear of the prosperity of your soul. You have long walked through a wilderness of trials and temptations. O that he now would bring you into a wealthy place ! " Pray without ceasing," and do not faint, though an answer is not speedily given. The Lord will come in his own time, and rebuke the adversary for your sake, and your path shall be as " the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." I hope you will receive good accounts of your brother. Cast all your care upon God ; and believe me ever,

Your affectionate parent in the Lord,

D. M.

She thus concludes the year :—

Dec. 31. I have been much drawn to secret prayer to-day, and spent more time in it than usual ; avoiding every unnecessary avocation, and even some that were otherwise, in order to give myself wholly to prayer and spiritual exercises. I have found sweetness and inward liberty ; though the adversary was very busy, trying every method to intercept me. I do not prove all the power of prayer I wish, but I have certainly felt more of it this last eighteen months than in any former period. I wish to pray without ceasing. I see the necessity of praying always, and not fainting : but I find hope deferred fatigues the mind, and wearies the spirit. Yet I feel, through grace, determined to pray on till I have it to say, not one word has failed of all that the Lord has spoken concerning me. Upon a retrospect of this year, now come to an end, I find I have infinite cause to praise the Lord, much more so than I supposed, when, some days ago, I was consulting only my present feelings. It is melancholy to think how soon a sense of the Lord's goodness dies away from the soul, even after the strongest manifestations of his love. Lord, what is man, that thou shouldst show kindness to him ! How ungrateful, insensible, unfaithful, and unprofitable. Yet still thou art good : but thou knowest whereof he is made, and rememberest he is but dust. O, how do I long to feel sovereign grace triumphing over all my weakness, ignorance, unbelief, fear, yea, every thing that is contrary to the will of my God. Since

January, 1783, the Father of mercies has several times appeared in my behalf in a remarkable manner : in public, private, and in secret : indeed, times without number, but more especially on three different occasions ; twice at his own table, and once in secret. What consolation did he pour into my soul ! With what communion with himself did he favour me, immediately before I was visited with a severe trial ! Words cannot, may silence speak his praise ! Some months after that, how wonderfully did he condescend to explain the dispensations of his providence and grace toward me, when they were so mysterious I could not understand them, and had well nigh sunk in the mire of despondency : but he took me out of that horrible pit, set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. Then was I made to ride upon my high places for months, till again, through the power of temptation, the remains of unbelief, and the subtle workings of the adversary of souls, I was driven to extremity. Again Jehovah, who “sits above the water floods, and remaineth King for ever,” spoke to my soul with divine power, and the mountains melted down. He condescended to tell me what he was doing, and what he would do, and how much I was mistaking his dealings with me. Amazing goodness ! O to be humble and thankful ! here again my head was lifted up above my foes, and I was made to triumph over those who threatened to lead me captive. When stretched upon a bed of sickness, O how did my God disappoint my fears, and exceed my expectations ! My mind, which on these distressing occasions, used to be painfully languid, and often the seat of inexpressible fears, was refreshed with a sense of the divine presence, and raised above the present affliction : and my lips, which used to be closed in these trying seasons, were opened to speak the praises of Him who dealt so kindly with me. But time would fail to tell of all the instances of the goodness of my God during the last twelve months ; and not to me only, but to others also with whom I stand nearly connected ; to some by the ties of nature, to others by those of grace. Suffice it to say that he hath done all things well : and that eternity alone can bring to light, or make sufficiently known, all his goodness to me. With my soul, and all that is within me, I desire to bless and magnify his holy name :

“To praise him for all that is past,
And trust him for all that’s to come.”

Amen.

CHAPTER XX.—1785.

Diary and correspondence continued.

January 12. Very frequently I have taken up my pen to give expression to my complainings; but now I would indite thanks and praises to my God for his goodness. I entreated him to usher in the year with his blessing, and he has granted my request. He is a God of mercy: blessed are all those who put their trust in him. He gives me to know more and more that he is the Hearer of prayer. On Sabbath last I had an opportunity to renew my covenant engagement to the Lord, by sitting down at his table. While uniting in prayer with the great congregation, the Lord Jesus drew nigh, brought with him unutterable peace, and shed a heavenly serenity throughout my soul: this increased upon sitting down at the sacred table, and continued the whole day. I enjoyed a delightfully spiritual frame wherever I went, and in whatever I was engaged. The Lord filled my hands all day with his work, and my heart with his love. Some hours were spent with the sick, in prayer and conversation, and in ministering to their wants in various ways; and the Lord countenanced those labours of love. My heart, at times, felt almost too full for utterance.

— 20. Unwell in body, but comfortable in soul. The Lord has increased what he so graciously bestowed on Sunday week. I have had a fuller enjoyment and clearer view of my God and Saviour. It has been almost as one unclouded day, and the cry of my heart is, "Ever, Lord, abide thus with me." I found my mouth opened to tell, before those who fear his name, what he has done for my soul. To-day I have enjoyed many privileges, and endeavoured to let others partake of my enjoyments, by having the gospel preached to them. Many flock to hear; may they understand. The comfort I now enjoy makes me dread severe trials; yet I would not anticipate evil. One, in particular, I have cause to fear; but I leave all to my God, who doth all things well.

— 28. Still my fellowship is with the Father and the Son. In writing to a Christian friend to-day, on the goodness of God, and on the sweetness of the love of Jesus, my heart seemed too full for utterance. This I also experienced immediately after, when conversing with a Christian. I could not but wonder at this barrenness of expression, when divine love so prevailed in my heart. It convinced me that both the power and the propriety of speech are from God, and are given or withheld as he sees meet. I long for the eloquence of Cicero, for the persuasive powers of Demosthenes, when speaking of the things of God; yet *these*, without his blessing, would not produce the great and desirable effect at which I aim,—his glory, in the con-

version of sinners. I must endeavour to be contented with meaner talents, and rest satisfied that even these may and *will* effect great things, if *divine assistance* be afforded.

Feb. 13. (Sunday.) My God has been unspeakably gracious all this day. I was strong, trusting in the Lord. My faith in Jesus seemed as a strong cable, fixed to an immovable rock. I walked in the light of a luminous faith, and by his strength and light was carried through difficulties with ease and comfort. I was also privileged with an opportunity of showing forth the death of Jesus; and truly he was with me in his house and by the way. In the afternoon found the company of those that were not alive to God exceedingly *irksome*. What a blessing it is always to associate with *living souls*.

March 12. Three weeks have elapsed since my last date; various hinderances have been thrown in the way; but I believe nothing but absolute necessity should prevent my taking notice of God's dealings with me, by committing them to paper; as I find a lively sense of his goodness is too apt to die away from my remembrance. I have not lost what the Lord bestowed on the 9th of January, and the Sunday following; but I do not at present enjoy so much *sensible comfort*. I seem to have more *faith* than *love*, and would gladly hope that the alteration is rather in *enjoyment*, than in *possession*. Last Sunday evening, in the chapel, the Lord renewed his goodness to my soul, but it has not proved permanent. I feel this change a great disappointment, as I had hoped the time was come when I should be able to "rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and in every thing give thanks." I have not relinquished all hopes of its terminating in this mature and permanent experience. I fear lest my unfaithfulness should be the cause of any change for the worse. His grace can triumph over all my weaknesses, ignorance, and unbelief. I am also grieved that no effectual door is yet opened for my more extensive usefulness, according to his promise. Still, I will hope against hope, because he is faithful, and his promises are "yea and amen."

April 1. Again ten days more are expired. How rapidly does time fly;—imperceptibly it steals away. How ardently do I desire that my improvement may be in proportion to the constancy and rapidity of its flight. I have still much cause to adore and bless my God, as the Hearer of prayer. O that every fresh proof of his goodness may strengthen my trust for future mercies; and more firmly confirm me in the belief that not one word which he hath spoken concerning me shall fail of its accomplishment. From my deficiency herein, springs much distress; my harp is often hung upon the willows, and then my heart experiences much bitterness. Holy Father, whatever it is that causes these depressions, remove it far hence; and let me every moment dwell in love, and in God, that God may dwell

in me. Lately, at times, I am hurt by entering too keenly into the subject on which I am conversing; especially when it happens to be a painful one: this produces too many words, many unnecessary ones; and, for a little, interrupts that calmness of mind, serenity of soul, and consciousness of the presence of God, I wish every moment to retain; and which always sweetly solemnizes the spirit.

May 4. I am in general kept waiting, as those that watch for the morning, for the appearing of my God in that full display of his goodness which he has promised. As yet, my hopes are disappointed: but I am thankful I have not been permitted to cast away my confidence. I still believe that "He that shall come, will come, and will not tarry." I have lately been favoured with many evident answers to prayer; my extremity has been the opportunity for divine mercy to interpose, and often very remarkably to disappoint my fears. In secret prayer, the Lord frequently renews his loving kindness to my soul; but I long to prove these manifestations of divine love more transforming. With the psalmist I may say, "My soul breaketh for the longing it hath" for full conformity to the divine image, and for power to fill up all my time for and with God.

— 27. A time of close trial from various causes. I have been made to feel, not only the emptiness, but the bitterness of persons, places, and things. I have been and still am in heaviness through manifold temptations. In the midst of all, I am much drawn to secret prayer, yet without any particular returns. All nature seems an aching void. O what would the world be to me, with all that is admired in it, without the sensible enjoyment of my God? A BOCHIN indeed! But, Lord, do thou shine gloriously from between the cherubim, into my soul;—then all creation smiles, and every object wears a delightful aspect. For some time past, my opportunities for doing good have been abundantly increased; and with eagerness of desire I have embraced them, and felt in my element when so employed.

June 22. Since my last date the tide of temptation has run as high as ever I experienced it since I knew the Lord. It was, indeed, *high water*; but it did not continue very long; neither had I any remarkable deliverance,—the flood abated by degrees. O for a full rest from the days of adversity; such at least as this state admits, and which the word of God authorizes me to expect. Daily I am alternately tossed between hope and fear, expectation and disappointment. I wade through the mire of perplexity and uncertainty, but still my trust is in the Lord. O my God, make me strong in faith.

July 26. It has now been for weeks a time of almost constant inward suffering, arising chiefly from keen unsatisfied desires after God. I cannot easily express what has been endured. Yet many opportunities to act for God have been afforded, most

of which have been cheerfully embraced. Strong desire after secret prayer has also been allowed me; yet not followed with any remarkable answers. I have struggled hard at a throne of grace to trust in the Lord, in spite of every temptation, and have often found it good to do so. For some days past my heart has felt ready to break with anguish of spirit from perceiving a want of conformity to God, and from a desire to glorify him. Lately my desires for this have been so intense that I have been sometimes tempted to think they came from an enemy; because they robbed me of present enjoyment, and sometimes *degenerated* into *impatience*. Within these few days the Lord has condescended to show me wherein I err and thereby suffer loss. He gives me to see that these desires come from himself; but that they must be kept so far within proper limits as not to prevent my sense of, and gratitude for, what he has already done for me: and that one way to express this gratitude is by a proper enjoyment of what he has imparted, and a calm waiting upon him by faith for what he has promised, and will in his own time perform. In repeatedly attempting this, I have found an instantaneous change in my soul for the better.

August 18. For some days after my last date, I enjoyed such a degree of freedom from painful temptations as made me fear a state of insensibility. I prayed to the Lord, and he increased my comfort. Some weeks ago, I met with a trial, the *last* and *least* expected. At first, I felt as if thunderstruck; but soon recovered from this, and then sunk into a degree of supineness which alarmed me. I had, from the first, given it up to the Lord; entreating that his will might be done in this affair, and that the issue might terminate to his glory and my good. He afforded me no particular light, but kept me looking to, and depending on himself for direction; and has given me for some time an increase of love. Jesus has been near, and precious; and the enemy is in some measure chained up. I have thought, perhaps this unexpected event may be one step toward the accomplishment of the promises, though I do not see how it can: but I remember the Lord has said, "He will bring the blind by a way they know not." My soul therefore waits upon the Lord, disposed to stand still and see his salvation. O that he may make a plain path for my feet, with respect to this trial. I dread mistaking his will. He hath promised to be my counsellor. Lord, be it to thy handmaid as thou hast spoken.

— 31. Through mercy I have enjoyed tranquillity of mind, in general, for some time. I have felt not only alive to eternal things, but comfortably so; with some power to lie passive in the hands of the Lord, and to pour out my soul with frequency and fervour at a throne of grace, which is my resource in all situations. A dawn of light, pointing out the path of duty respecting the trial formerly mentioned, begins to arise; and

brings comfort and gratitude along with it. I cannot easily express the sweet and ardent desire that fills my soul, for power and opportunity to glorify God by active service. I envy those who are thus highly favoured, and watch as those who wait for the morning light; for the time when I also shall be permitted to throw in my mite for the support of that *best* of all *causes*, RELIGION. Lord, hasten the happy time.

September 4. The Lord enabled me to be earnest in prayer for support and comfort under trials—to be brought out of them in his own good time—and to avert those which I dreaded; and *now* he enables me to witness for him that he is the Hearer of prayer. He has in mercy literally answered my petitions. He has removed entirely the heavy trial mentioned above, which so perplexed me; and has also filled me with gratitude for his goodness, in disappointing my fears. The Lord was peculiarly gracious to me last Sabbath. He in an uncommon manner strengthened my body, and refreshed my soul. While at the table, the Lord Jesus, the Master of the feast, drew so very nigh that faith seemed swallowed up in enjoyment. I was lost in wonder, love, and praise; and was permitted, like John, to lean my weary head on the bosom of the Saviour. He gave me sweet liberty to make all my wants known to him: my hopes, my fears, my desires. It was a time to be remembered. O that I may never forget it, but be enabled to improve to the utmost this gracious visitation. Jesus has abode with me ever since. He carried me through difficulties the same day; and next morning I needed his presence much, being visited with severe bodily pain; my Beloved was near, and this sweetens every dispensation. O my God, now carry on the work rapidly, and fulfil the desires of my heart.

—21. Through the abounding mercy of my God I am still enabled to hold fast what was bestowed on the 4th instant, though it has been at times as if through fire and water. Jesus is still near, and clear to the eye of my faith. O that he may never more depart. My soul is, more than usual, athirst for salvation. For many months my strongest desires and greatest expectations were for a larger circle of action; these last still continue, but now with the addition of the former. I sweetly pant to prove the utmost extent of Christ's kingly power in my heart. I have much cause to praise him for many blessings, both temporal and spiritual. I see his gracious hand at work for me in many things, which calls forth my gratitude, and increases my trust in him; but till he has delivered me from all my foes, there will be partial departures from him, and a deficiency in every grace; nor shall I be able to make him suitable returns.

October 5. I have much cause to say, truly God is good to the soul that seeks him. He still enables me to hold fast what he bestowed the 4th of last month; and has lately increased it.

Last Sunday evening, in the chapel, God was peculiarly present ; sweetly solemnized my mind, and increased my communion with himself : and on Monday, though necessarily employed in worldly matters, he kept me in the comfortable enjoyment of what he had bestowed. In the evening, when engaged in secret prayer, God was very gracious ; my feelings were uncommon : it seemed as if the Lord were about to work a greater work in my soul than ever ; but in that moment the adversary so furiously assaulted me, that I seemed driven back from the very port of bliss. To-day I enjoy calm peace and inward liberty. Prayer is my resource on all occasions ; and truly I experience it an unspeakable privilege. My God permits me to bring all my affairs, both great and small, to himself : and condescends to hear and answer my petitions. I hope I am learning more gospel simplicity, and am taught to look for all I want by faith. For many months my whole soul has been thirsting after a *larger sphere* of action ; agreeably to the promises of a faithful God. For these last few weeks I have been led to plead earnestly for more holiness. Lord, give both, that I may praise thee. This evening again, in secret prayer, my gracious Saviour gave me so much of his delightful presence as seemed to supersede the medium of faith ; it felt as if lost in fruition ; I was ready with Peter to say, "It is good to be here." The storehouse of divine mercy appeared open to me, yet I had not power to lay hold on all I wanted and desired. It seemed rather a time of *enjoyment* than of *wrestling*. Lord, teach me how to improve to the utmost these seasons of love.

— 8. This has been a precious day ; unutterable sweetness has been diffused through my soul. I have been permitted to behold the face of my gracious Saviour, and to enjoy communion with my God and Father. Yesterday, my perception of divine objects was not so clear ; this was painful, as I feared it prognosticated the removal of my comfort, and an overshadowing of my delightful prospect ; but to-day my God, who is rich in mercy, scattered the rising clouds. The Sun of righteousness, by the brightness of his shining, dispelled the dreaded gloom, and dissipated whatever threatened to intervene and obscure my heavenly light. I have been enabled to plead for holiness, for every blessing Christ has purchased, and for the witness and the fruit of the Spirit. Come, O my God, in all thy fulness come !

We must here pause for a moment, again to introduce to the reader the amiable and afflicted Lady Hope. In the autumn of this year, she removed to Bristol Hot-Wells ; her health was now rapidly declining, and it became painfully evident to her affectionate friends that the time of her departure was at hand. By this affliction all the tender sympathies of Lady Maxwell's heart were excited ; and with a solicitude truly maternal, she

endeavoured, by consolatory epistles and fervent prayers, so to fortify the mind of her "dear daughter," that she might be enabled with Christian confidence to enter the "valley of the shadow of death." The following letters, which it is believed were the last she ever wrote to the dying saint, will be read with interest :—

TO LADY H. HOPE.

Coates, October 26, 1785.

"Grace, mercy, and peace be multiplied" to my dear daughter more abundantly in her present distressing situation. I heard with surprise, from Lady G., of your being much worse by the journey to Bristol. I fear the pain of parting with a dear friend has made things worse than they would otherwise have been. I would have written sooner, to express my maternal sympathy with, and anxiety about you, but that I feared, from the account I had, it might be improper. This, however, did not prevent, but doubled my attention to the use of those means whereby I thought I could most essentially serve you; but as Lady G., who was with me yesterday, read me part of a letter written with your own hand, I thought I would venture a few lines.

It affords me comfort to think that you have such a good woman about you as Mrs. S., and I felt my heart cleave to your amiable brother, Mr. John, for his kind attention to you. Lady G., for my satisfaction, was so good as to read a part of his letter to her, wherein he speaks of finding you better than he expected; though I fear the best account that can be given of the present state of your health is not what your friends would wish. But, my dearest daughter, I rejoice that you are in the hands of *Him* who loves you infinitely better than I, or any earthly friend, can do; who will make all your bed in your sickness, and smooth the pillow of disease; and who, I trust, will sweeten the bitter cup with a comfortable sense of his love. O that he may, in the absence of relations and Christian friends, make up your every want, disperse every cloud, scatter all your fears; wipe away every tear; enable you to lean your weary head, by faith, upon his bosom; and give you liberty to pour all your complaints there. O that you may, more than ever, taste salvation in the name of Jesus; that dear name, which

"Charms our fears, and bids our sorrows cease."

May you prove the sovereign efficacy of his precious blood in cleansing you from all sin, and in filling you with divine peace and heavenly tranquillity of mind. May he chain up the adversary of your soul, and give you peace in all your borders; and, with unbroken resignation, enable you to acquiesce in all his blessed will concerning you. All these great things your dear Lord can easily work in your soul: if he but speak the word the work shall be done; nay, one look from him can

effect it. O what a comfortable view of things is this, when we feel ourselves poor and weak as helpless infancy, and can do nothing. The Lord give you to experience it fully.

How willingly would I endeavour to render you every kind attention, could a wish convey me to your bedside. Indeed, Lady G. has been so kind as to beg I would go up with her, supposing, also, my health might be bettered by it; but I fear it would not answer. The season is now far advanced, and set in very cold; and I do not see how I could return alone, and I could not tarry all winter. You may believe what comfort it would give me to see you once more in the land of the living.

Lady G. is wonderfully well; and how kind has the Lord been to her, in delivering her so quickly from that load of difficult business that B. has caused her so long, and at such a *critical time*. Truly, our God is good to the soul that trusts in him. She proposes to leave this soon; it is a comfort to me that she is to be with you. I received £10 from her, for the school and poor; your attention is great. But I am afraid I am making this too long, forgetting your weakness.

To the ever watchful care of the Shepherd of Israel, who neither slumbers nor sleeps, I commit my dearest daughter, and remain her truly affectionate parent in the Lord, D. M.

TO LADY H. HOPE.

Coates, Nov. 7, 1785.

I sent my dear Lady H. a few lines by post some days ago, and hope the fatigue of reading them has not hurt her. Trusting that this is the case, I take the opportunity of our dear friend's going to you to write again. I am happy to think she goes so soon; if it be the Lord's will, I hope you will have a comfortable winter together, so far as weakness and many complaints of body on both sides will permit.

I hope the Lord keeps you as in the hollow of his hand, and covers your defenceless head from the fierce attacks of the enemy, in your weak state. He in mercy often stays his rough wind in the day of his east wind, knowing what poor, weak, helpless creatures we are, and how little we can bear. He is a God who delighteth in mercy, and has no pleasure in the distress of his people. When he afflicts them at any time, it is to answer some great purpose; and while he chastises with the one hand, he supports with the other; and in general, on these occasions, his consolations are neither few nor small. I trust my dear daughter finds the best wine has been kept to the last. O that the heavenly attraction may be strong, so as to raise her superior to painful feelings, and to deliver her from that anxiety which brings weakness upon the soul. Believing views of Jesus and of the infinite merit of his sufferings are a ground of much solid comfort to the distressed Christian. With what holy boldness

may these be plead at a throne of grace, and with much acceptance, even when the soul, to its own apprehension, is all darkness, confusion, and fear; pressed down with manifold temptations. This is a foundation that cannot be sapped, that standeth ever strong, immovably fixed in God. On this Rock of ages my dear daughter is built; therefore, praises at all times, and in every situation, should her glad tongue employ. *Behold your God*, and be strong. He lays the foundation of your hope and trust in *oaths*, in *promises*, in *blood*. Surely, then, you should stand firm as the beaten anvil to the stroke. What should discourage you? Or why, with vexing thoughts at any time, should your soul be disquieted? With a holy fortitude *you* may look forward to death, judgment, and eternity. Though weak and poor in yourself, yet, in virtue of your union with the Lord Jesus, you may grasp omnipotence, and call it your own. "Who can lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?" Jesus, your surety, hath answered all the demands that law and justice had against you; fly, then, to your strong hold in the day of trouble, and you may defy all the powers of earth and hell.

The sacrament was given in Edinburgh last Sunday, in our church. Mr. Randal preached a most delightful sermon upon the love of Jesus to his church, "Who loved his *church*, and gave *himself* for it." I was very poorly in body, but tasted his love in my soul. On Monday I was not so well as to be able to go abroad; but my Jesus, on the last day of the feast, gave me my portion at home. How tenderly does he deal with his people!

Miss N. is just come from B., and tells me Lady C. E. is a good deal better; her pulse come down to seventy-six, and her pain much abated; and suffers with a sweet spirit. May Jesus make himself fully known to her, and comfort her in the time of trouble. Mrs. H. and family are pretty well. But Lady G. will give you all particulars; therefore I need not take up your time and strength. Many thanks for your kind attention in sending Mrs. Fletcher's letters, &c., &c. She has indeed suffered a great loss in the death of such a husband; but he was highly favoured in his last conflict. Happy those who are safely landed. Lady G. insisted upon paying for the small books, though I told her you had desired I should. So that I have £1 5s. of your money: say to what use it should be put.

I fear the length of this; do read but a little of it at once. May goodness and mercy follow my dear daughter all her days; a large portion of divine love be mixed in every cup, so as to conquer every fear; and at last may she enter the harbour of peace and endless bliss in the full triumph of faith. So prays her very affectionate friend in Jesus,
D. M.

'The affliction and death of friends appear to have excited the following seasonable and solemn reflections:—

"November 17. O time, swift of wing, how rapid is thy flight! Blessed be God, who has taught me to pierce beyond an hour. Yet what cause have I to mourn that I have not more fully improved that important talent. Where, Lord, lies the defect? I can appeal to thee, O thou Searcher of hearts, that it is my constant desire to fill up every moment with something valuable. I fear I too much overlook the *present*, in expectation of something more favourable in *future*. The awful blanks of time are many. How many are numbered with the dead during last week! even among those I knew, either by character or personal acquaintance. But for the joyful prospect of a happy eternity, the *mutability* of all created good would spread around our world a black and impenetrable cloud. Blessed be God, though all here are shadows, all beyond the grave is ever during substance."

One extract more shall close this year.

"December 31. I was much disposed this day to spend my time with God, to consider my ways, and meditate on the time that is past; met with interruptions, but, being for the profit of others, I endeavoured to be satisfied. I asked a token for good in the end of this year, as in the former one, and my gracious God condescended to give it. How many are my mercies! this last year they have been great. My communion with the Father and the Son has been uncommonly sweet and near; and, since the 4th of September, almost uninterrupted. In temporal things, also, the hand of my God has been very visible. He has also given me much bodily health; and, when deprived of the means of grace through indisposition, he kept my soul as a watered garden; and gave me, in prayer and meditation, delightful enjoyment of himself. Lately, also, my God has opened an unexpected door for usefulness. Surely I bend under a load of mercies, spiritual and temporal: O for a more grateful heart. How shall I sufficiently praise my God and Saviour. Come, Lord, and assist me to praise thee in higher strains than ever. O come, and accomplish in me thy promises, and all my powers shall be greatly enlarged."

CHAPTER XXI.—1786.

Death of the Ladies Hope and Glenorchy—Lady Maxwell appointed executrix of the latter—Visits England—Meets with the Rev. Alexander Mather—Character of—Correspondence with him, and the Rev. C. Atmore.

THIS was an eventful and memorable year in the life of Lady Maxwell. That sacred bond of union, which nothing in life had

been able to dissever, was at once broken up by the irresistible and unrelenting arm of death. On the first of January, Lady Henrietta Hope bade adieu to all the pains and disquietudes of mortality, and entered into life. She had long languished under an enfeebled body, and had been called to endure a complication of afflictions. While these, sanctified as they were by grace, naturally induced her to trim her lamp, and to wait, in an expectant attitude, the coming of her Lord; they also tended to prepare her friends for the painful bereavement. Lady Glenorchy was with her at Bath; a close and unwearied attendant. It was her honourable employment to watch over the last lingering moments of the dying saint, to soothe the bed of death, and to witness the flight of her redeemed and triumphant spirit.

"But after every medical exertion had proved ineffectual, and the medicinal virtue of the wells yielding no relief, she meekly rendered up her ransomed soul into the hands of her Redeemer. Thus died Lady Henrietta Hope, more full of honour than of days, leaving behind her a fair copy of every thing praiseworthy and of good report. A considerable part of her property she left for pious and charitable purposes."*

Though Lady Maxwell could not but rejoice to hear that the object of her affectionate solicitude had conquered her last enemy, and entered into the joy of her Lord, the pang at parting appears to have been acute. This is inferred from her expressive silence. During this season of suffering she did not venture to record her emotions. There is a chasm in her diary of three weeks; a rare case; and when she resumed her pen, she did not even notice the painful occurrence. On some occasions, probably, she found that the only way to avoid excessive and inordinate sorrow was, by laying a powerful restraint upon herself, to keep the cause of her distress, as much as possible, absent from her mind. It has been a matter of surprise to her most intimate friends, that she should so carefully shun all conversation relative to the premature loss of her husband and child; but she appears to have been influenced by the above reason. To her friend, Miss Ritchie, who had requested from her an account of the means by which the Lord brought her to himself, she replied, "You ask me to give you the particulars of my awakening and conversion; and how, since, the work of sanctification has been carried on. To give you a minute detail of this, would carry me beyond the limits of a letter, and lead me to do violence to my *temper* and *feelings*; the former by nature *shy*, and in this respect not entirely conquered by grace; the latter *keen* and *tender*; easily wounded by recalling past scenes of wo, when indeed they were tried to the uttermost." To the request of her friend she could not, however, remain entirely silent; and therefore proceeded in her usual laconic way on this subject:—

* Gibbon's Memoirs of Eminently Pious Women, vol. ii, p. 260.

" Suffice it to say, I was chosen in the furnace of affliction. The Lord gave me *all* I desired in this world, then took *all* from me ; but immediately afterward sweetly drew me to himself." That Lady Maxwell's feelings were exquisite on the present occasion will be no cause of surprise. While religion moderates and refines the sensibilities of our nature, it, at the same time, imparts a susceptibility which can only be felt by those who are the subjects of its influence. She was deprived of her nearest and dearest earthly friend ; one for whom she had entertained the most cordial and unmixed esteem ; for whose spiritual and eternal welfare she had exerted her utmost energies ; and one who had ever been most ready to enter with her into every measure calculated to meliorate the moral condition of man. They had for years walked to the house of God in company ; one in sentiment, and one in heart :

"————— Nor varied aught
In public sentence, or in private thought."

Now they were separated for a season ; the one to enjoy her full reward ; while the other remained a few years longer, to witness the power of divine grace ; and to prosecute with undeviating fidelity that important work which the great Head of the church had in reserve for her. On resuming her pen she wrote as follows :—

" January 21. For these last three weeks I have expected greater things than it has pleased my God to bestow. He is good ; supremely good when he gives, nor less so when he withholds. But I dare not say that he has withheld altogether. He has, in mercy, favoured me with several *sweet*, though *short* visits, since the first of the month. I have, indeed, had some exquisitely painful moments, and felt ready to sink beneath the pressure ; but, by trusting in a faithful God, he soon raised me up, and has restored an intense thirst for all the mind that was in Christ. He has given me a desire equally ardent for power to bring forth much fruit, even a hundredfold ; and in tender mercy has granted me to see, where I least expected any, some good effects of my labour. He does, indeed, enable me to strengthen and comfort his own children : to him be all the glory. Lord, let a little one become as a thousand : nothing is too hard for thee. But what I now principally desire to see, is the conversion of sinners. O, my God ! give me many clear, decided proofs of this ; many witnesses for thee, brought out of darkness into thy marvellous light. O put energy into the words I speak, the letters I write, the prayers I offer, for and with others ! and do not suffer me to remain in the world comparatively useless : while, at the same time, my heart burns with desire to glorify thee in every possible way ; and while I am encouraged to

expect much from thy own faithful word of promise. Come, Lord, O come quickly, and do as thou hast said."

When her ladyship wrote the above, she appears to have attained her former tranquillity : but scarcely were the wounds healed, and the tears wiped from the cheek, occasioned by the departure of Lady Hope, before Lady Maxwell was again called to the work of sacrifice.

"When sorrows come, they come not single spies,
But in battalions."

So, at least, it proved in the present instance. Lady Glenorchy, the next illustrious individual in this threefold union of private friendship, and of public worth, "full of plans for the glory of God, and good of men," and busy in the prosecution of them, returned from Bath to Edinburgh in the beginning of this summer. Her friends observed, with concern, her declining state of health. She spoke much to them of death, and of her persuasion that, to her, it was near ; and uniformly expressed her satisfaction and joy at the prospect. Religion, in her, was not the production of gloom, either during the progress of life, or in the near views of its termination. Almost her last words were, "If this be dying, it is the easiest thing imaginable." Disease prevailed—and not many hours afterward she expired, in the forty-fourth year of her age, at the house of the countess of Sutherland, on Monday, the 17th of July, 1786. Of her may be said in truth, what with equal propriety cannot be said of every departed Christian : "Her path was as the shining light, which shineth more and more to the perfect day."*

On this melancholy occasion, Lady Maxwell ventured to record her feelings ; and, in doing this, could not avoid glancing at her former loss. On the 21st of this month, four days after the demise of her friend, she expressed herself in the following manner :—"I have met with a severe and most unexpected trial in the death of a dear Christian friend. How mysterious are the ways of God ! But we know the Judge of the whole earth must do right. Silence, therefore, becomes his creatures, under the darkest and most painful dispensations. In mind and body, for the last few days, I have been distressed ; and at times overwhelmed with grief and astonishment :—

'Every sorrow cuts a string,
And urges us to rise.'

Yet nothing but sin need hinder my heavenly progress. O that my God would now come, and absorb my will in his. May he give victory over every spiritual foe, that I may enjoy a peaceful habitation in my own soul ; and derive every possible improvement from this bereavement. I have now, within these

* Gibbon's Memoirs, &c., vol. ii, p. 271.

seven months, lost two invaluable Christian friends. O to get nearer to the *fountain*, now the *streams* are cut off. I believe that two years ago the Lord gave me warning of what has now occurred. The death of these two friends is in some measure explanatory of my experience *at that time*; but I expect *far greater things* than have as yet happened to make it fully clear to me. At present I would stand still, and see the Lord bringing about his own purposes, and fulfilling to me his own promises. I wish to be much in prayer; I greatly need it. The prayer of faith 'shuts or opens heaven.' Come, Lord, and fully turn my captivity."

The solemn and affecting events thus brought under review are admirably calculated to teach many important and useful lessons: it would indeed be well if the living would lay them to heart. But, though there are few reflections more trite, or more readily admitted, than that life is uncertain, and must shortly terminate;—that the most delicious sweets of earthly friendship are exceedingly evanescent;—that all human greatness

"————— is like a circle in the water,
Which never ceaseth to enlarge itself,
Till, by broad spreading, it disperse to naught;"

yet, alas! how feeble the influence which these truths appear to have on the actual doings of men in general. This is greatly to be lamented. It is thus for want of practically observing what is generally known and acknowledged, that the world is ruined. The pious Christian, it is sincerely hoped, will not overlook or readily forget one particular which claims his attention—the ardent and steady affection exercised by these excellent females toward each other. This affection, as we have seen, had to struggle with difficulties; yet it rose superior to them. Though these two ladies differed in sentiment on some important points in theology; though these sentiments, at times, led to some collision in their endeavours to do good; yet, being fully convinced that they were both seeking to attain the same grand object, difference of sentiment could not resist the claims of mutual esteem, or diminish from the unfettered exercise of that love which thinketh no evil. On the contrary, these firm friends, with Lady Hope as their endeared companion, throughout the whole of their religious course, exemplified to the church, and to the world, the full force of religious principle; in cementing the genuine members of Christ's mystical body in an indissoluble union; and held up an example of pure and disinterested affection, worthy the imitation of the whole religious world.

Lady Maxwell never yielded to the reveries of ungoverned fancy, nor was she the creature of wild and undefined impressions: on the contrary, she ever diligently sought to know the will of God, by the legitimate use of every means of grace afforded her; and in cases of perplexity and uncertainty she

stood still, and gave herself to prayer. But in the course of the last two years, especially, she had experienced such an intensity of desire for the prosperity of Sion; and had received in answer to prayer so many powerful and peculiar applications of Scripture promises, in reference to this subject, as led her firmly to believe that God was about to enlarge her borders, and to employ her in a more extended field of usefulness. She knew not the way in which this should be effected; and frequently observed that "the aspect of providence seemed to contradict the promises;" yet she could not be tempted to relinquish her hold of these promises; and now it was about to be done to her according to her faith. The cold calculators on what is called a rational religion, which goes to exclude all immediate operations of the Spirit from the heart, may find some difficulty in accounting for it, but it is a fact which cannot be contradicted: Lady Maxwell had long a persuasion which, in her mind, had all the influence of an absolute certainty, that God had some great work for her to perform, though no intimations of providence appeared to authorize such a persuasion. By the *will* of Lady Glenorchy this prophetic impression received its full accomplishment; and what even to Lady Maxwell appeared mysterious was thus clearly explained. She was, as before intimated, constituted the sole executrix of her deceased friend; appointed the principal superintendent and manager of her numerous chapels, both in England and Scotland; and became thus invested with the disposal of important funds, for other religious and charitable purposes. What were the precise powers with which her ladyship was intrusted, is not known to the editor; but they appear to have been extensive and almost unlimited. The following extract develops her views and feelings on this interesting occasion:—

"July 28. Since the 25th the Lord hath dealt wonderfully with me. By the death of the dear friend mentioned above, and by the overruling providence of Him who is the great Disposer of all events, an increase of fortune has devolved upon me. This, through the grace and strength of the Most High, I firmly purpose to use for the promotion of his glory, by endeavouring to promote to the utmost his cause and kingdom in the world. This is agreeable to the desire of my deceased friend, and consonant to her practice while it remained in her own possession: it also accords with the whole bent of my own soul, and with the will of that gracious God who has, for these purposes, intrusted me with it. With these views, I have this day attempted to make a solemn dedication of myself to him; with all that he has now and formerly given me, or may yet give me; earnestly imploring that he would afford me light to discover his will in all things necessary for me to know; and power and inclination constantly to comply with it: also much, very much of the wisdom of the serpent, with a large proportion of the harmlessness,

of the dove, happily blended ; so as to enable me to manage all my affairs with discretion, that in nothing the gospel may be blamed ; that I may, besides, be faithful to Him who hath appointed me ; rising superior to the smiles or frowns of mortals. Thus, O my God, I have again given myself to thee : let me never live to draw the impious breath that would retract the deed ; but may I, to the latest moment, prove the happy effects of this and many former self-dedications. The greatest satisfaction I feel from this bountiful dispensation is its coming to me so *evidently*, so *strongly* marked with the *divine* signature. This was evident, not only by the powerful impression made on my mind by the Spirit of God, as if he had said, '*This comes from me,*' at the very moment the first intimation of it was given by man ; but, also, by its being so very explanatory of God's dealings with me, for the last two years. What has been very mysterious to me is *now fully* explained. For some days the Lord has been leading me to review my spiritual experience for a number of years : in which I have been enabled to trace so clearly the wisdom, the beauty, the propriety, and the goodness of his dispensations, both of providence and grace, as fills me with wonder and gratitude ; and produces in me a deep and powerful conviction of his faithfulness. Language entirely fails me when I would express my sense of obligation. O that I may ever retain this equally strong. And now, Lord, what can thy handmaid say more ? O may my future life speak thy praise ; and do thou come and accomplish the promises given for the prosperity of my soul ; then shall it be as a watered garden."

On the 5th of August, Lady Maxwell wrote as follows :—
"Many difficulties have occurred connected with the important business committed to me ; but I feel encouraged to go on in the strength of the Lord ; believing that, as the whole matter originated with himself, he will bring me through all, in a proper manner. Indeed, he *is* bringing me, step by step, through these difficulties ; and I now see and conclude, without a doubt, that this is the great blessing promised me in general, at his own table, in May, 1784. This is that active sphere in his cause which he promised me years ago ; but for which he enabled me firmly to believe at the time alluded to above. Since then through what a variety of painful exercises of mind have I passed ; but my faithful God has at last brought matters to a crisis ; yet, alas ! it is by the loss of a dear Christian friend. I am kept crying to the Lord for wisdom, direction, and light. He affords me sweet encouragement to expect all I want ; and he makes his word truly profitable to me. He also gives me reason to believe that he is carrying on his work in my soul. I can almost believe he has imparted the blessing so long sought, *perfect love*. The beginnings are but small, and I dare not positively conclude respect-

ing my state ; but will wait, and expect the Lord to shine upon his work. O how graciously has he dealt with me ! How shall I sufficiently praise him for his faithfulness and goodness in every respect !”

In this spirit Lady Maxwell entered upon the work assigned her ; and, without loss of time, prepared for a journey to England. On the 5th of September, she left Edinburgh, and did not return until the 18th of October. She visited most of the places where Lady Glenorchy’s chapels were situated ; and made such arrangements as she deemed best calculated, by the blessing of God, to secure religious prosperity. Her diary does not enter into particulars ; but several difficulties are alluded to, which beset her path : most of these, however, she was enabled to surmount ; and, on her return, devoutly thanked God for direction and assistance. In one respect, at least, her journey proved highly advantageous to herself. At York, where her ladyship tarried for some time, she met with the Rev. Alexander Mather. “ Here,” she writes, “ I enjoyed many privileges ; especially, in conversation and social prayer with that servant of Jesus Christ, the Rev. Alexander Mather.” An intimate friendship commenced between them ; and in her subsequent correspondence with this eminent minister of the gospel she will be found to speak without reserve. Mr. Mather was, at this time, the superintendent of the Wesleyan society in the above city. The following character, given of him by his brethren in the ministry, will show that Lady Maxwell selected her acquaintance with judgment, and knew how to appreciate true excellence :—

“ This venerable man travelled in our connection for forty-two years with great success. His usefulness in the church of God for a great part of that time, both as a father to the preachers, and as a steady supporter of all the branches of Christian discipline, was exceedingly great. Very numerous were his spiritual children, whom he instrumentally brought to Jesus Christ and salvation ; but his grand *forte* was, the edifying of believers, and building up the church of Christ : here he was always at home. He was, we may truly say, a blessing to all among whom he sojourned.

“ His afflictions during the decline of life were extremely painful ; but his confidence and comforts corresponded with his deep and extensive acquaintance with the things of God. The Lord had been unusually propitious to him, in the natural endowments of both his body and mind. He rose every morning at four o’clock, and could labour till nine at night, without apparent fatigue, in duties which required the closest application. In conversation and debate, he entered at once into the spirit of the business or subject in hand, and could instantly meet an objection with an appropriate reply. He was a perfect master of all the minutæ of the doctrines and discipline of Methodism. Hereby he

was enabled, from a principle of duty and conscience, to afford Mr. Wesley very considerable assistance in the superintendence of the societies. His wisdom and experience, his courage and perseverance, rendered him an invaluable friend to our connection, during some late troubles under which it suffered. He was never intimidated through fear of calumny from pursuing those plans which he conceived to tend toward the peace and union of our societies. His noble soul was elevated above the momentary opinion of a party. He looked only at the interests and glory of the Redeemer's kingdom, and waited for his reward in a better world."*

Lady Maxwell heard Mr. Mather, the night previous to her leaving York, preach in his usual luminous manner, on the important subject of faith. She was so forcibly impressed with his observations that, on the following day, she wrote to request him to favour her with an outline of the discourse. The way was thus opened for an epistolary intercourse, which was continued with mutual benefit until the growing infirmities of age, on the part of Mr. Mather, rendered it impracticable. The following letters will conclude this year :—

TO THE REV. ALEXANDER MATHER.

Easingwoud, Oct. 18, 1786.

REV. SIR,—The kind attentions you have paid to my best interest since I came to England encourage me to hope that you will not refuse the request I now make, if only your numerous engagements will admit of your compliance. I regret that I did not mention it this morning before I left York; but necessary attention to pecuniary matters and want of time caused it to escape me. The favour I mean to ask of you is this, that you would employ your first leisure moments in throwing together a few thoughts on the words you spoke from last night. To save you the trouble of much writing, and that I may have the satisfaction of receiving your communication in the course of a post, you may write as concisely as possible. And as you possess the pen of a ready scribe, I hope you will not find the task imposed, in the least burthensome. I found the subject suitable to my state; but, from the causes above mentioned, was prevented reaping all the benefit I desired.

Accept of my best wishes for yourself, and those you stand most closely united to by natural ties. I pray that the highest expectations of a fond parent may be fully answered in your hopeful son. His natural and acquired abilities afford you pleasing prospects; and if, to these, is superadded the *greatest orna-*

* Minutes of Conference, vol. ii, p. 82. For farther particulars relative to the life and labours of this excellent man, the reader may consult the Methodist Magazine, for the year 1780, p. 91, and for the year 1801, p. 112.

ment of human nature, what can you want, to render your happiness as complete as it can be expected in this vale of tears ; except still more of the divine image upon your own soul, and yet farther success in your endeavours to promote the cause and kingdom of your Master.

That you may be thus highly favoured is the desire of,
Rev. sir,

Your faithful, humble servant, D. MAXWELL.

TO THE REV. ALEXANDER MATHER.

Edinburgh, December 15, 1786.

REV. SIR,—I have been much and necessarily occupied with temporal concerns, since my return home : this has abridged my time for work in which my heart is more engaged, and I have thus been prevented returning you many and sincere thanks for the sermon. I find it truly profitable, and derive benefit from it on every repeated perusal. It inculcates a lesson which it is difficult to learn, *living by faith*. All nature opposes this : yet I am convinced that I can only proceed in the divine life in proportion as I exercise this heavenly principle. And such is the present state of my mind, that no sermons, no letters, no books, no conversation, are of any use to me, nor do I reap any comfort from them, except they treat of the life of faith. I have not yet the evidence my soul requires, that I am possessed of *full salvation*. But the Lord is teaching me many important lessons necessarily connected with it. He so condescends to my weakness and ignorance as I cannot express. He also makes his word in secret a constant source of comfort and encouragement to me. In my pursuit of perfect love, I have often lately felt as if just at the port of bliss ; my soul has been filled with a hope full of immortality, and I have thought the time to favour me was come. Yet, still, something has prevented me from taking possession of the good land : but I hope this will not long be the case ; for the Lord has so moulded my spirit that nothing can satisfy me, but constant communion with, and full conformity to, my God.

The whole world, without this, appears to me an aching void, a wilderness of shadows. I suffer keenly from the remains of unbelief. Do assist me to hew this Agag in pieces before the Lord. It is a great mountain ; yet, had I faith, it would become a plain before the great Zerubbabel. That I should remain so slow of heart to believe, after all the Lord has done for me, and all the kindness he is daily showing me, is truly amazing. I really feel ashamed ; and, yet I cannot help it. You say I may, but I cannot easily believe this. May the Lord show me where lies the hinderance, and speedily remove it.

I should wish for an hour's conversation every day with you and Mrs. Mather : but as that cannot be allowed me, permit me

to ask an interest in your prayers : for I can engage in nothing with satisfaction till this great matter is settled. Business is a burthen to me ; yet I must attend to it, as so much is committed to me. I know the Lord has peculiarly called me to it, and will therefore fit me for it ; this is to me a constant source of comfort. Without this conviction I should sink under the load, conscious of being unequal to the task.

Accept of my good wishes for the prosperity of your own soul, and for success in the work to which the Lord has called you. I hope Mrs. Mather sees much of the fruit of her labours. Remember me kindly to her, and believe me, Rev. sir,

Your faithful, humble servant,

D. MAXWELL.

P. S. I have this day paid into the hands of Mr. Pawson, £3 3s. for the purpose mentioned to you in England. It is the widow's mite. I pray it may be blessed.

TO THE REV. CHARLES ATMORE.*

Coates, December 30, 1786.

Upon recollection I do not find, Rev. sir, that I have any thing material to add to the particulars mentioned to you on Thursday, concerning Mrs. Thompson :† but as you expressed a desire to have my thoughts on that subject in writing, I have thrown together a few hasty ones, being much circumscribed in point of time.

I never was in any particular habits of friendship with Mrs. T. ; but for some years past being connected with her in church fellowship, I had, of course, frequent opportunities of conversing with her. From the knowledge thus obtained, I was led to regard her as a person possessed of sterling worth, rather than shining talents ; as one originally cast in a very amiable mould : of gentle manners ; sweet, pacific disposition ; full of benevolence and good will to all ; rich in good works ; and of great moral rectitude. I am inclined to think that her ideas of religion in the earlier part of life were rather crude and indigested, but that in more advanced years she obtained a clearer view and more experimental knowledge of some of the leading doctrines of Christianity ; such as the fall of man and his recovery by Christ.

When convinced of her original depravity, and the absolute necessity of a Saviour to restore to the divine favour and image,

* The Rev. C. Atmore was, at the period of this date, one of the Wesleyan ministers stationed in Edinburgh. Having obtained help of God, he continues to this day ; enjoying the esteem of his brethren and the affection of thousands, and is at present the superintendent of the London east circuit,—(1821.)

† Mrs. Thompson was a pious, steady member of the society, in Edinburgh, for many years. It will be gratifying to her surviving friends to see this short sketch of her character by the pen of Lady Maxwell.

she set out in good earnest in the ways of God : nor ever slackened her pace till called home to receive her great reward. Being remarkably constant in her attendance on all the means of grace, she quickly found that "the hand of the diligent maketh rich." She soon obtained "the knowledge of salvation, by the remission of sins ;" and I believe never after lost that antepast of heaven.

Thus happy in her own soul, her heart, deeply dyed with generous kindness, expanded in large and fervent desires that multitudes might share in the superlative felicity which she enjoyed. This led her, as Christian prudence directed, to be instant in season and out of season, to promote, in every possible way, the spiritual interests of her fellow creatures.

Toward the close of life, it seemed good to the great Disposer of all events to visit her with various trials ; more especially the death of two hopeful sons. Here all her maternal feelings were called forth, and keenly exercised ; but, in the midst of severe distress, she maintained a deportment worthy the character which she sustained. She bore these bereaving afflictions, not with the stoical apathy of the philosopher, but with the tender sensibility and noble firmness of the Christian happily blended. She kissed the rod that smote her, and bowed in sweet submission to the divine will.

Her mind seemed raised superior to the fears of death. She rather wished, and sometimes expressed, a desire for dissolution ; and God soon gave her the desire of her heart. The almighty fiat went forth,—death came commissioned to put an end to all her sufferings. During the concluding scene she appeared full of peaceful resignation, but spoke little ; the force of disease, in some measure, laying an embargo upon the powers of speech. Thus lived and died this excellent woman. She is now where the inhabitants say not they are sick. As Christians, it is our privilege to reap permanent advantage by every such providential dispensation.

"For *us* they sicken, and for *us* they die."

With good wishes for your spiritual prosperity, and great success in your ministerial labours, I remain, Rev. sir,

Your obliged, humble servant in the bonds of the gospel,
D. MAXWELL.

CHAPTER XXII.—1787.

Difference of opinion entertained by Christians on the nature and extent of salvation—Lady Maxwell's sentiments on this subject—Attains full salvation—Her views with regard to the Trinity—She establishes Sabbath-day schools—Corresponds with Miss Ritchie, Mr. Mather, and Mr. Atmore.

THE views entertained by Christians on the *nature and extent* of gospel salvation must be of the utmost importance. If these are erroneous, their pursuit after it will be more or less retarded. And yet it is to be lamented that difference of sentiment has long obtained on this highly momentous subject. While all the sincere disciples of Jesus insist on the absolute necessity of holiness in order to *final* salvation, they are not agreed with respect to the *degrees* of holiness attainable on earth; or, rather, as it respects the *time* when this holiness may be received. Some, from a deep conviction of the entire and radical depravity of human nature, and from a consciousness of the numerous imperfections which attach to us as men, have denied the possibility of our being delivered from the remains of the carnal mind until the article of death; or, at least, conceive that God does, for wise and gracious purposes, suffer his people to struggle with their innate corruptions, so long as they remain in the body; that, though sin is subdued, it is not eradicated; that, though it does not reign, yet it maintains a warfare within, until mortality is swallowed up of life. Others, with views equally correct on the depth and malignity of human depravity, and equally conscious of unavoidable imperfections, conceive that they see enough in the Scriptures to authorize them to expect a *full* and a *present* salvation: not only from the guilt and dominion of outward sin, but also from the very remains of corruption in their hearts. They see an extent and efficacy ascribed to the atoning blood, sufficient to wash away all moral pollution: "Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works:"—"the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin." They are encouraged to expect the entire benefit of this renewing and cleansing process, by numerous exceeding great and precious promises: "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. I will also save you from all your uncleannesses." "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." "Having these promises," they cleanse themselves "from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." While they pray that God would "sanctify them wholly, body, soul, and spirit, and preserve

them blameless to the coming of the Lord Jesus :” they believe it to be their imperious duty, and their exalted privilege, to love and serve God with all their heart, and soul, and mind ; to “ be perfect, as their Father, who is in heaven, is perfect.” And having this hope in them, “ they purify themselves, even as he is pure.” “ Beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, they are changed into the same image from glory to glory as by the Spirit of the Lord.” Thus they “ increase with all the increase of God,” until they attain to the “ full stature of a perfect man in Christ.”*

* As there is still afloat much mistake and misrepresentation on this important branch of Christian doctrine and experience, the editor deems it expedient to subjoin the following extract from Mr. Wesley’s “ Plain Account of Christian Perfection.”

“ Q. What is Christian perfection ?

“ A. The loving God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength. This implies that no wrong temper, none contrary to love, remains in the soul ; and that all the thoughts, words, and actions are governed by pure love.

“ Q. Do you affirm that this perfection excludes all infirmities, ignorance, and mistake ?

“ A. I continually affirm quite the contrary, and always have done so.

“ Q. But how can every thought, word, and work be governed by pure love, and the man be subject at the same time to ignorance and mistake ?

“ A. I see no contradiction here. ‘ A man may be filled with pure love, and still be liable to mistake.’ Indeed I do not expect to be freed from actual mistakes till this mortal put on immortality. I believe this to be a natural consequence of the soul’s dwelling in flesh and blood. For we cannot now *think* at all, but by the mediation of those bodily organs which have suffered equally with the rest of our frame. And hence we cannot avoid sometimes *thinking wrong*, till this corruptible shall have put on incorruption.

“ But we may carry this thought farther yet. A mistake in judgment may possibly occasion a mistake in practice : for instance, Mr. De Renty’s mistake touching the nature of mortification, arising from prejudice of education, occasioned that practical mistake, his wearing an iron girdle. And a thousand such instances there may be, even in those who are in the highest state of grace. Yet, where every word and action springs from love, such a mistake is not properly a *sin*. However, it cannot bear the rigour of God’s justice, but needs the atoning blood.

“ Q. What was the judgment of all our brethren who met at Bristol, in August, 1758, on this head ?

“ A. It was expressed in these words : 1. Every one may mistake as long as he lives. 2. A mistake in *opinion* may occasion a *mistake* in practice. 3. Every such mistake is a transgression of the perfect law. Therefore, 4. Every such mistake, were it not for the blood of the atonement, would expose to eternal damnation. 5. It follows that the most perfect have continual need of the merits of Christ, even for their actual transgressions, and may say for themselves, as well as for their brethren, ‘ Forgive us our trespasses.’

“ This easily accounts for what might otherwise seem to be utterly unaccountable, namely, that those who are not offended when we speak of the highest degree of love, yet will not hear of living *without sin*. The reason is, they know all men are liable to mistake, and that in practice as well as in judgment. But they do not know, or do not observe, that this is not sin, if love is the sole principle of action.

“ Q. But still, if they live without sin, does not this exclude the neces-

That the latter sentiments were those entertained by Lady Maxwell, on this important branch of Christian doctrine and experience, has been already abundantly manifest. While she believed every particle of good in man flows to him through the medium of atoning blood, she beheld an infinite worth in that atonement, to procure for her the highest possible degrees of grace; and a sufficient efficacy in the grace of God, *fully* to transform her into the divine image. She durst not, therefore, limit the Almighty, or prescribe any boundaries to the operations of his grace on the human heart: but, on the contrary, from the period she obtained justifying mercy, she invariably hungered and thirsted after full salvation—to be delivered from all inward corruption, and to be filled with all the fulness of God. She had often “felt as if just at the port of bliss;” and, to continue the figure, soon after the commencement of this year, she entered into this haven of rest. And,—though she sunk deeper into self-abasement, became more completely sensible of her entire de-

sity of a Mediator? At least, is it not plain that they stand no longer in need of Christ in his priestly office?

“A. Far from it. None feel their need of Christ like these; none so entirely depend upon him. For Christ does not give life to the soul separate from, but in and with himself. Hence his words are equally true of all men, in whatsoever state of grace they are: ‘As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in me: without (or separate from) me ye can do nothing.’

“In every state we need Christ in the following respects: 1. Whatever grace we receive, it is a free gift from him. 2. We receive it as his purchase, merely in consideration of the price he paid. 3. We have this grace not merely from Christ, but in him. For our perfection is not like that of a tree which flourishes by the sap derived from its own root, but, as was said before, like that of a branch, which, united to the vine, bears fruit; but, severed from it, is dried up and withered. 4. All our blessings, temporal, spiritual, and eternal, depend on his intercession for us, which is one branch of his priestly office, whereof therefore we have always equal need. 5. The best of men still need Christ in his priestly office to atone for their omissions, their shortcomings, (as some not improperly speak,) their mistakes in judgment and practice, and their defects of various kinds. For these are all deviations from the perfect law, and consequently need an atonement. Yet that they are not properly sins, we apprehend may appear from the words of St. Paul, ‘He that loveth hath fulfilled the law, for love is the fulfilling of the law,’ Rom. xiii, 10, 12. Now mistakes and whatever infirmities naturally flow from the corruptible state of the body, are no way contrary to love, nor, therefore, in the Scripture sense, *sins*.

“To explain myself a little farther on this head. 1. Not only *sin*, properly so called, that is voluntary transgression of a known law, but *sin* improperly so called, that is, an involuntary transgression of a divine law, known or unknown, needs the atoning blood. 2. I believe there is no such perfection in this life as excludes these involuntary transgressions, which I apprehend to be naturally consequent on the ignorance and mistakes inseparable from mortality. 3. Therefore *sinless perfection* is a phrase I never use, lest I should *seem* to contradict myself. 4. I believe a person filled with the love of God is still liable to these involuntary transgressions. 5. Such transgressions you may call *sins*, if you please: I do not, for the reasons above mentioned.”—*Wesley's Works*, vol. vi, pp. 500, 501.

pendence on the Saviour, and continued to thirst after a growing conformity to God,—yet, after waiting for the most satisfactory evidence, both from the *witness* and *fruit* of the Spirit, she was constrained to bear her steady, decided, and consistent testimony, that the bitter root of sin was destroyed.

Lady Maxwell's experience from this time, to use her own expression, evidently "ran in a deeper channel." She had for years "walked with God," but now her walk became more intimate and familiar. She had long felt "the powers of the world to come;" after this, she frequently felt as if on the borders of immortality, holding converse with its heavenly inhabitants. Her faith became so vigorous as, in a great measure, to draw aside the veil of sensible things; and enabled her to contemplate with a steady eye invisible and eternal realities. While an indescribable emptiness appeared impressed on all terrestrial objects, "the whole affectionate powers of her soul" were concentrated and *fixed* on Jehovah. To promote the glory of God, to extol the riches of his grace, to exalt the Saviour, to recommend redeeming love, to seek the salvation of souls, was, especially from this period, her only and delightful employment. This was the element in which she lived, and moved, and breathed. And though still conscious of her own nothingness and weakness,—though still the subject of temptation, called to wrestle with principalities and powers, and the rulers of the darkness of this world,—yet her spiritual enjoyments became more deep, solid, constant; her *frames* less subject to fluctuation. The pious and judicious will not, therefore, be either surprised or discouraged if they find, in her subsequent experience, an acquaintance and familiarity with the deep things of God not common to the generality of Christians.

Her views respecting the sacred and sublime doctrine of the Trinity, deserve particularly to be examined with *modesty* and *caution*. "She considered that the revelation which God has made of himself to man must needs be very partial; sufficient, however, for every practical and saving purpose; that no revealed truth is of a merely speculative nature, but that every one is designed to produce a practical influence on our mind and conduct, on our duties or privileges. The doctrine of three distinct divine subsistences in the *one* indivisible God, is a revealed truth, and on the authority of that revelation the Christian believes it: but in her view, and in her experience, this grand truth was not merely believed but *known*. The revelation of the doctrine is not for speculation; its direct influence on conduct is not easy to see; then it must wear an important aspect on the Christian's privileges." Thus her ladyship thought; and believed that she received divine manifestations from each person in the ever blessed Trinity; and enjoyed a *distinct* communion with the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; frequently quoting,

as confirmatory of her views and feelings, a passage which often afforded her peculiar consolation. "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father; and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him." "If a man love me he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him," John iv, 21, 23.

At first these glorious manifestations of Deity excited her surprise, and were even accompanied with a sacred awe, amounting almost to dread. She knew not how to account for them, and feared lest her apprehensions and feelings might lead her astray. She therefore long pondered these things in her heart, and remained silent: but becoming more satisfied of the reality of her experience, she ventured to open her mind to a few of her pious and spiritual advisers. What were the sentiments of Mr. Mather on this interesting subject is not known: but in July of this year Mr. Wesley wrote to her ladyship as follows:—

"After Miss Roe, first, and then Miss Ritchie, had given me so particular an account of that branch of their experience, I examined, one by one, the members of the select society in London on that head. But I found very few, not above nine or ten, who had any conception of it. I think there are three or four in Dublin who likewise speak clearly and scripturally of having had such a manifestation of the several persons in the ever blessed Trinity. Formerly I thought this was the experience of all those that were perfected in love. But I am now clearly convinced that it is not. Only a few of these are favoured with it. It was indeed a wonderful instance of divine mercy that, at a time when you were so encumbered with the affairs of this world, you should have so much larger a taste of the powers of the world to come." In a subsequent letter, he says:—"Mr. Charles Perronet was the first person I was acquainted with who was favoured with the same experience as the Marquis de Renty, with regard to the ever blessed Trinity.* I have, as yet,

* The Marquis de Renty descended from one of the most noble houses of Artois. He was the only son of Charles de Renty, and was born in the year 1611, at Beny, in Lower Normandy. In early life, the reading of "Kempis on the Imitation of Christ," made a powerful impression on his mind; and, by the blessing of God, induced him to seek the one thing needful, the salvation of his soul. At the age of twenty-two he married Elizabeth de Balsac, daughter of the Count of Graville. When he had reached the age of twenty-seven it pleased God to touch his heart more powerfully, and this time he marked as the beginning of his entire change and perfect consecration to the service of God. From this period he became a burning and shining light, adorning in all things the doctrine of God his Saviour. But his race was short: he died at Paris, on the 24th of April, 1649, in the thirty-eighth year of his age. The passage in his Life to which Mr. W. alludes above, is as follows:—"I bear in me ordinarily an experimental verity and a plenitude of the most holy Trinity, which elevates me to a simple view of God; and with that I do all that his providence enjoins me,

found but very few instances ; so that it is not (as I was at first apt to suppose) the common privilege of all that are ' perfect in love.' " *

The above quotations sufficiently show that these peculiar sentiments were, at the time alluded to, entertained only by few individuals ; and it is believed such experience is at present rarely heard of. Christians will doubtless form different opinions on this subject. Some, probably with an unbecoming temerity, and without hesitation, will proscribe the whole of it as undisguised mysticism :—others will impute it to a misguiding imagination :—many will conclude that what was peculiar might arise from the mind dwelling particularly on the different parts of the divine economy, in the work of human redemption. Others again will refer it to the difficulty of clothing in mortal language the pure and sublime enjoyments of " a soul in commerce with her God : " while a few, from a correspondence of feeling and enjoyment, may find no difficulty in receiving, without any qualification, the testimony of such persons as De Renty, Perronet, and Maxwell. All, however, will do well to remember that it is a subject, not of *speculation*, but of *experience*. This may tend to throw around our decisions the chastenings of a becoming modesty : it may lead to the humble inquiry, How far am I qualified to decide at all ? It may even tend to suspend the judgment, and to save from the folly of hasty dogmatism, until we have attained to the same entire devotedness to God as had been attained by the pious lady whose testimony we are at present canvassing. And all will do well to remark, that her ladyship only deemed those manifestations of mercy valuable, in proportion as they tended to transform her into the divine likeness. Besides, whatever may be the opinions entertained on this subject, we shall not err if we still say with Mr. Wesley, when writing to one of the above pious individuals, " There is nothing better, in heaven or earth, than *love* ! There cannot be, unless there were something higher than the God of love. So that we see distinctly what we have to aim at. We see the prize, and the way to it. Here is the height, here is the depth of Christian experience ! ' God is love : and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.' "

not regarding any thing for their greatness or littleness, but only the order of God, and the glory they may render him." See an extract of the Life of M. de Renty, by Mr. Wesley.

* Wesley's Works, vol. vii, p. 26, 27.

" He," says Jeremy Taylor, " who goes about to speak of the mystery of the Trinity, and does it by words and names of man's invention, talking of essences and existences, hypostases and personalities, priorities in co-equalities, and unity in pluralities, may amuse himself, and build a tabernacle in his head, and talk of something, he knows not what : but the good man, who *feels* the power of the FATHER ; to whom the SON is become wisdom, sanctification, and righteousness ; and in whose heart the SPIRIT is

Lady Maxwell's benevolence also continued to expand in proportion to her piety: her faith and works still walked hand in hand. Though she had, by the wise providence of God, recently entered upon a new and extensive field of labour, which was likely to occasion much solicitude, and to afford ample scope for the exercise of all her powers, she was still on the look-out for fresh schemes of usefulness, for new methods of doing good. She had for years thankfully witnessed the gracious effects produced by the religious instruction of children, fostered by her maternal care in her own charity school; and was thus well prepared to hail and welcome the dawn of a new and glorious era, which had already begun to shed its light and influence, and to dispel the darkness which for generations had fatally brooded around the habitations of the British poor. About five or six years previous to this period, the immortal RAIKES had commenced his benevolent operations in the city of Gloucester; his example and success had in a measure roused the attention of the humane and pious, and SUNDAY-SCHOOL establishments were gradually rising up in England to adorn and exalt our country, and to carry the tidings of salvation and the blessings of Christianity into the most humble dwelling of the most obscure hamlet in our land.

The first intelligence of these important and salutary efforts would doubtless be received by her ladyship with joyful emotion; and while others were hesitating and perplexing themselves with doubtful conjectures, she hastened to class herself with the most zealous and active patrons of Sabbath-day schools. It does not appear that any thing in this way had as yet been attempted in Scotland; and the majority, even among the well disposed, were for some time inclined to think that the regular

shed abroad; this man, though he understands nothing of what is unintelligible, yet he alone *truly understands* the Christian doctrine of the Trinity."

The editor knows no author who has written on this sublime doctrine with such an immediate reference to the experience and privileges of believers as Dr. John Owen, in his valuable work, entitled, "*Of COMMUNION with God the FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST, (each PERSON distinctly) in LOVE, GRACE, and CONSOLATION.*" And he would earnestly recommend to his pious reader, especially if called to minister in the sanctuary, a diligent and serious perusal of this *devout* and able treatise. It is presumed that he would then feel less difficulty in admitting any peculiarity in phraseology, or strength of expression, he may meet with in the present volume. This justly celebrated writer, after having enlarged on the nature of communion in general, proceeds, with his usual ability, to show "that the saints have distinct communion with the FATHER, and the SON, and the HOLY SPIRIT, (that is, distinctly with the FATHER, and distinctly with the SON, and distinctly with the HOLY SPIRIT,) and in what the peculiar appropriation of this distinct communion unto the several persons doth consist."

Those who would prefer a judicious abridgment of this work, freed from the peculiarities of the author's creed, may meet with it in the "Christian Library," vol. x, p. 409, &c.

parochial schools, established in the southern parts of that enlightened country, superseded the necessity of any other means for the instruction of the rising generation. So far as a common education, or a mere ability to read, is concerned, this might be true; but still the chief, the essential object, aimed at by Sabbath schools, was wanting—the serious and solemn inculcation of religious principle, and of religious precept. Lady Maxwell and other pious associates perceived that, as it respected the observance of the Sabbath, and the more direct business of religious instruction, the children of Scotland, like those of the sister kingdom, were entirely left to the care of their parents; multitudes of whom, indifferent to the welfare of their own souls, felt no solicitude for the salvation of their offspring. Commiserating the case of these unfortunate youth, Lady Maxwell promptly determined to establish several Sabbath schools under her own immediate patronage; and applied to her correspondents in England for such information as might help to guide her in the prosecution of her pious purpose.

This spark of benevolence being once elicited soon burst into a holy flame; and, in the course of this year, the friends of religion in Edinburgh formed the pious resolution of collecting together, on the evening of each returning Sabbath, as many of the children of the poor as possible, for the express purpose of imparting to them religious knowledge. This institution is still in active and very extensive operation. Its friends and supporters had for a season to struggle against the influence of prejudice; but, happily for the poor children of North Britain, these prejudices, in general, have long since been subdued. Patient and persevering, though noiseless activity in this labour of love, by different denominations of Christians, has finally succeeded and, instead of having still to encounter a cold and doubting opposition, they now see the religious instruction of youth by Sabbath schools resorted to, from their own metropolis to the remotest corners of the land. But we ought never to forget how much we are indebted to those pious individuals who *first*, almost solitary and alone, broke up the *fallow ground*; and, in spite of the sullenness of indifference, the scowl of suspicion, and the sneer of contempt, continued to sow the *good seed*:—*they* laboured, and *we* have entered into their labours.*

But Lady Maxwell shall again speak for herself.

* In order to revive and encourage the numerous schools already in existence, and to accelerate the formation of others throughout the country, an institution denominated "THE SABBATH-SCHOOL UNION FOR SCOTLAND," was established at Edinburgh, in the beginning of 1816. In less than a year after its commencement the committee had the pleasure of reporting, that 324 schools, containing 22,827 children, were already embraced under their bond of union. The editor has not in his possession a later report, but believes that the field of operation has been greatly enlarged.

TO MISS RITCHIE.

Coates, January 5, 1787.

I unite with you in praising our gracious God, who deals so bountifully with you in sickness and in health! How great is his goodness! It is also matter of thankfulness, that he has enlarged your sphere of usefulness. How high the honour, how rich the privilege, to live and act for God. "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour." He hath lately increased my fellowship with heaven: time seems with me almost swallowed up in eternity. In meditation I dwell much in that *unbounded space*. How contracted are our views while confined within the limits of time; here there are no objects in any degree adequate to the vast desires of an immortal soul; but, viewing eternity, what a boundless prospect appears, what a full scope may we there give to our most extensive wishes. There all our holy affections may roam at large, and find abundance of objects perfectly suited in kind and duration to their nature.

The Lord has taught me many important lessons within these six months, and I feel very desirous of learning every thing he would have me to know. Every new acquisition of divine and experimental knowledge leads to fresh discoveries of my ignorance. Though the Lord deals thus kindly with me I have not that degree of evidence which perfectly satisfies me that the work of sanctification is fully wrought in my soul; yet I think it increases. And what matter of praise is it that now, when I am obliged to be so much more than ever formerly occupied in temporal affairs, my mind is not deranged by them; that still the whole bent of my soul is to God. The more he gives me of the world, the more clearly he makes me see its emptiness;—it recedes, it disappears, it lessens in my view. A considerable part of Lady G.'s fortune is by her appropriated to different purposes, which gives me much to do; but I see it as the work the Lord has assigned me, and I engage on this account the more heartily in it; but I have much need of the prayers of God's people for a large increase of heavenly wisdom. I doubt not you will continue to bear me and my burthens before the Lord; and do entreat him, that all *his* will in this affair may take place; that his counsel may stand.

and that these benevolent efforts are still continued with unabated vigour and increasing success.

From the recent important suggestions and powerful reasonings of that eminent philanthropist and divine, the Rev. Dr. Chalmers, may we not hope that a host of new operators, and new energies, will be called into action; and that the ultimate object of diffusing religious light and influence throughout the whole mass of the rising generation, will, at least, be greatly accelerated?—*Vide the Christian and Civic Economy of large Towns.*

It gave me pain to be so near you in October last, and not to see you ; but it was necessarily so. I found it good to mingle with the excellent ones of the earth at that time. When called in providence to be again in the south I hope to enjoy the privilege of visiting your peaceful habitation. O that every revolving season may meet us pressing on in the heavenly road ; ripening apace for eternity ; filling up the few remaining moments for and with our God ! And at last, may an abundant entrance be administered unto us. May we enter the heavenly port in full sail.

D. MAXWELL.

TO THE REV. ALEXANDER MATHER.

Coates, January 16, 1787.

I am much indebted to you, Rev. sir, for your kind attention to my best interests ; but infinitely more so to your dear Lord and Master, who has dealt very bountifully with me since my last to you. Some little time ago the Lord Jesus visited my soul in a most delightful manner, when joining with a Christian friend in prayer, praise, &c. I feel a *poverty* of expression when I attempt to say what I enjoyed at that time : words cannot convey an adequate idea of it. Jesus sweetly attracted my heart, and arrested all the affectionate powers of my soul. He appeared in his native beauty, shining with the milder beams of his mediatorial glory. In the evening of the same day, while hearing a sermon preached in my own house, God the Father, in *solemn majesty*, drew near. I felt sensibly the approach of Deity : I seemed filled with a heaven of silent love and sacred awe. Since then my fellowship has been uninterruptedly with the Father and with the Son. In secret prayer and meditation, I am permitted to converse with my God and Saviour, as a man with his friend ; nay, even when engaged in worldly business, this heavenly intercourse is not suspended. What is man that God should deal thus wonderfully with him ! I write thus particularly to *you*, because I know both Mrs. Mather and you were much interested in my spiritual prosperity. My unbelief is now almost conquered : but still I feel led to cry mightily to the Lord, that he may give me still stronger evidence of *the work* being wrought. Satan says it is only an increase of communion with heaven ; therefore, I plead for the most *unequivocal* marks of *sanctification*. In the meantime my enjoyment is great ; not *ecstatic joy*, but peace, divine peace, flowing as a river, constantly supplied by believing views of the Father and Son.

Thus far I had written yesterday, when necessary avocations called me away. To-day I resume my pen, and with it the delightful theme of redeeming love. I feel pressed in spirit to testify anew of the loving kindness of the Lord. He fed me last night and this morning on angel's food. I was permitted to come very near, even to the footstool of his throne,

and to ask what I would. I seemed to have power to prevail with God. Whatever unbelief may afterward suggest, I certainly, *at present*, through superabounding mercy, dwell in love, and in God, and God in me. Yet still I thirst for more :

“Insatiate, to the spring I fly,
I drink, and yet am ever dry.”

But still I have no rapturous joy ; no, it is the calm serenity of a summer's day without a cloud, that fills, yea, overflows my soul. O to Jesus how infinitely indebted. I hope Mrs. Mather and you will assist me with your prayers that the Lord may confirm and establish my soul : that he may maintain what he has wrought for me, and not to suffer any enemy whatever to rob me of it. I cannot help remarking how well timed the goodness of the Lord is ; how peculiarly suited is this sensible increase to the situation I have been in for many months ; *immersed* in temporal business, which as yet is enveloped in confusion and difficulty, sufficient to dissipate the mind altogether, at least the mind of a *female*. Through mercy, upon the whole, I have been kept calm on tumult's wheel ; enabled to commit all to Him who rules in heaven and earth : only asking that *his* will may take place, and *all his* counsel stand. I hope matters are at last drawing toward a crisis. I now wait the *ultimatum* of *Doctors' Commons*. This, as the *dernier resort*, must determine upon which *will* administration is to be granted. Wishing you and your wife every spiritual blessing, I remain, Rev. sir,

Your obliged, faithful, humble servant in the Lord,
D. MAXWELL.

TO THE REV. ALEXANDER MATHER.

February 2, 1787.

Since my last the Lord has again made bare his holy arm in my behalf.

“Where shall my wondering soul begin to tell
His love, immense, unsearchable :”

“All my words are faint,
Celestial love no eloquence can paint.”

Suffice it to say, the Lord has kindled such a flame of divine love in my heart as I trust will never be extinguished, but burn brighter and brighter till it mingles with the blaze of eternal day. To confirm my soul in the grace given, my God again came down in *solemn majesty*. This *sacred grandeur* peculiarly marks, of late, my intercourse with the Father. My soul sensibly felt his solemn approach ; and said, without a voice, *God is here*. Soon after, the powers of darkness, if not commissioned, were permitted to level all their envenomed darts against me, and I sustained a hot engagement for many hours : but felt determined,

through grace, not to yield a hair's breadth to the enemy, nor to rest satisfied without a *decided victory*. This, through superabounding mercy, I obtained. The following day, being Sunday, I took the sacrament at the Octagon, where I enjoyed nothing very remarkable; but in my way home to Coates, the Lord Jesus drew near; not in the overwhelming greatness of sovereign majesty, or the dazzling brightness of unveiled glory; no, it was Deity clothed with the robes of mediatorial glory that, with an irresistible attraction, absorbed the affectionate powers of my soul. He condescended to converse with his creature, and permitted me to speak to him as a man with his friend.

“No more can be in mortal sounds express'd,
But vast eternity shall tell the rest.”

If a *taste* of divine love be thus transporting, what ecstasies must the happy soul enjoy when permitted to drink *its fill* at those streams that flow from the throne of God for ever. Some hours after, when conversing with a friend, my condescending Lord again came nigh, and drew my heart from earth away, and all created good. But great as were these two glorious interviews, they were small compared with a third I was favoured with that same night. When musing alone on the goodness of God, Jesus came to me, with such a fulness of light, of love, of heaven, as well nigh overwhelmed my ravished soul. The intercourse was so near, so heavenly, I really began to think the period was at hand when my connection with mortality would be dissolved. Surely I was much awake to the life of heaven-born spirits; surely I tasted all the joy of angels. My happy soul cried out,

“O love divine, all love excelling,
Joy of heaven, to earth come down.”

It was immediately suggested that what I most needed was greater degrees of conformity to the divine image: I then earnestly plead that my gracious Lord would bestow this upon me. In these repeated interviews with heaven, though admitted into communion with the triune Deity, I experienced no *ecstatic transport of joy*, but a *calm delighting* in all the silent heaven of divine love. How unspeakably great my obligations to sovereign grace! My communion and fellowship is at some times, to my *apprehension*, more peculiarly with the Father, at other times with the Son, as two *distinct* persons of the Trinity, though the same in substance. My perception of the personality of the Holy Ghost is not so clear. I seem to know him best as a divine agent for the Father and the Son, if I may so speak. Is this scriptural experience? I write thus particularly to *you*, because I find your letters peculiarly useful to me, as I did your conversation when in the south; and I wish to use every help

for the establishment of my soul. I dread sinking in any measure from that degree of spiritual life I now enjoy. Nature would impose silence, but grace forbids the prohibition. I therefore endeavour to do violence in this respect to my natural temper; and speak of the goodness of the Lord to my soul, as *Christian prudence* directs; but my present situation admits of few opportunities.

I rejoice to hear that the work of the Lord prospers in your hands, and that Mrs. W. is made a happy partaker of the pure love of God. I pray that many witnesses of it may be raised up: with you, with us, and in every part of the Lord's vineyard. I believe I stand alone here, which calls for great grace, and a very clear work, both as to the witness and the fruit. I do hope all the features of the new creature are drawn upon my soul, but many retouches of the divine pencil will be necessary to perfect the work. The work appears to me as yet small, though ripening into maturity; therefore, I feel a little shy to say much about it. I should sooner believe your account of the matter, if I did not think you viewed it through a *partial* medium. I return grateful thanks for your kind attention, and Mrs. Mather's; and am, Rev. sir,

Your much obliged humble servant in Jesus,

D. MAXWELL.

TO THE REV. A. MATHER.

Coates, March 11, 1787.

I know you wish to hear of the prosperity of my soul, and I am thankful I can say, the Lord still continues to do me good. He keeps me constantly looking to him for the continuance of his favour, and an increase of grace. God the Father has again condescended to visit my soul, (after a pretty severe struggle with the powers of darkness :) that moment there was a heavenly calm diffused through my mind; peace was proclaimed in all my borders, and a loving, sacred awe seized all my powers, though the manifestation was not so remarkable as the preceding one. Since then God the Son, also, has deigned to visit his devoted creature, and with him comes a heaven of love. He draws near, and with an irresistible divine sweetness attracts all the affectionate powers of my soul; as sensibly as the loadstone does the steel. My intercourse with the second person of the glorious Trinity produceth sensations different than when called to stand in the immediate presence of God the Father. The former is attended with inexpressible delight and divine sweetness; heaven fills every corner of the soul: the latter is preceded by and brings with it a deep, solemn sense of majesty; a holy, reverential awe rests upon my mind: the creature sinks into nothing before its great Creator. Yet this is so tempered with divine love as

to exclude every degree of dread. O the height and depth of redeeming love ; the line of our reason is by far too short to fathom it : but as “the hart panteth for the water brooks, so panteth my soul” to prove its utmost extent. Prayer is now my chief employ. I would be every moment conversing with my God ; but a variety of necessary avocations prevent this : yet I must confess, for the glory of my gracious God, that, when called to take up the cross of secular affairs, he is unspeakably good to me. He not only carries me through it, but comforts me in it.

In the course of his holy providence I am still called to wade through deep waters in reference to my great temporal affair. I am obliged to dispute, at least to defend, every inch of ground against those who are disposed to take every advantage that the precipitant departure of my deceased friend can give : but, through mercy, it moves me not. I have been obliged to tread the tedious round of the English courts of law, which has absorbed much time and much money ; and when matters were almost brought to a crisis there, and I fondly hoped all cause of litigation was at an end, fresh grounds of dispute are breaking up in Scotland. But I am nowise discouraged ; the work is the Lord's, and I leave it with him. At the same time I feel strengthened, both in body and mind, to take every step necessary on my part. *Duty* is ours ; *events* are the Lord's. He is with me, and I believe my opposers shall not prevail.

I have removed to another house, in which I have erected an altar unto the Lord ; and for the first time had the gospel preached in it on Thursday last, to as many as would attend. Do assist me by your prayers, that many may be convinced, converted, and sanctified throughout. After what I have written, you will think me unreasonable if I say I still plead for farther evidence : but it really is so ; I look for that strong witness that will bear me out in avowing before *all* that sin is destroyed in my soul. I am shy to disclose this to any at present. Is this the will of God ? Or is it the remains of natural timidity ? God has certainly wrought a change ; but how far *it goes* is another point. I write freely to *you* in hopes of profiting by the answers. I hope to hear that Mrs. Mather is quite well again, and that you and she are abundant in successful labours for the Lord. I remain, Rev. sir,

Your obliged servant and friend in Jesus, D. MAXWELL.

TO THE REV. ALEXANDER MATHER.

April 17, 1787.

Since I wrote you last, outward and inward trials have increased. The tide of spiritual temptations has run so high, and the infernal powers have so harassed me, I began to fear I should be overcome ; yet through mercy I have stood, though

only by *faith, exclusive of joy*. The former seemed sensibly strengthened, that I might endure temptation, and by it I was enabled to cleave steadfastly to Jesus; to trust in the Lord Jehovah, in whom I found was everlasting strength. This was my only refuge, and I fled to it, and there abode, in spite of all I feared or felt that was painful. Had I given way to evil reasoning in the smallest degree, I found I should have plunged myself to utter darkness and misery. It is, on these very trying occasions, hard work to resist it; so strong is the propensity of the human mind to call to our aid, in religious matters, what we find so necessary for direction in worldly affairs: but reason, though enlightened, I find, is utterly unable to extricate us out of the fascinating power of temptation, and the labyrinths of perplexity into which temptation often involves the soul. But what it could not do, because of weakness, I found effected by the mighty power of *simple faith*. I looked to Jesus as my only hope, and though I did not obtain immediate relief, yet the happy consequences soon proved the propriety of the expedient. Jesus drew nigh, and brought with him a heaven of peace and love. The powers of hell, and their dark suggestions, before him fled away: and as one whom his mother comforteth, so he comforted my soul; and has most graciously condescended again and again to repeat these heavenly visits: O that they may prove of a transforming nature. My soul breathes ardently after *positive holiness*. I find that I cannot rest satisfied with any partial attainment in the divine life; and great is my encouragement to press on for all that Christ has purchased, that God is willing to bestow, or I am able to receive. The goodness of the Lord is a strong stimulative, and a deep consciousness of my spiritual poverty prompts me forward. I do indeed feel poor and needy, though the Lord deals bountifully with me. Yesterday (the Lord's day) he made his goodness to pass before me in a remarkable manner, while attending public worship. My former visitations from on high were either from God the Father alone, or from God the Son alone, or from both together; on this happy occasion, it was from God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. I was favoured with a clear view of the Trinity, which I never had before; and enjoyed fellowship with a triune God. This filled my soul with a solemn awe and heavenly sweetness. I was in the spirit on the Lord's day, and felt my mind fixed in deep contemplation upon that glorious, incomprehensible object, the ever blessed Trinity. Hitherto I have been led to view the Holy Ghost chiefly as an agent, now I behold him distinctly as the third person of the Trinity. I have, in my own soul, an *experimental proof* of the truth of this doctrine, but find human language perfectly insufficient for speaking, or writing, intelligibly upon the subject. Eternity alone can unfold the sacred mystery; but, in the meantime, what we

may and do comprehend of it is replete with comfort to the Christian.

I stole a little time yesterday from business to write you, but could not finish my letter; and this morning, I find fresh cause to repeat the wondrous tale of God's goodness to my soul. My Jesus is with me to-day in a peculiar manner; shining sweetly upon my mind as altogether lovely. Surely his love is better than wine. I have been delightfully let into him, in secret prayer; and, asking in faith, have received out of his fulness.

"O love divine, all love excelling!"

Still I am favoured with a clear and distinct perception of the three sacred Persons. Assist me with your prayers, that I may improve to the utmost the goodness of my God.

I have been insensibly led, for months past, to speak and write with unusual freedom to you: I trust some good end is to be answered by it. Can you inform me where a letter will find Mr. Wesley just now? or do you know if he intends being in Scotland this summer? Will you be so good as to send me the rules of some of the best-regulated Sunday schools, with the form of advertisement previous to their being opened, and also the amount of the teachers' salaries. The people of Scotland are not fond of them, but I mean to give them a trial. Poor children, in general, have greater opportunities for being taught through the week here than in England; but, as our manufactories increase, these will of course lessen. Shall I make an apology for taking up so much of your time? With good wishes for yourself, Mrs. Mather, and your amiable son, I remain, Rev. sir,

Your faithful, humble servant in Christian bonds,

D. MAXWELL.

TO THE REV. ALEXANDER MATHER.

May 14, 1787.

Your last letter, Rev. sir, is replete with profitable matter; and of a kind to which I am not accustomed from the generality of my Christian correspondents; yet of that nature which suits me better than any other, and which, properly guarded, might be of great utility to the church of Christ. At present, it seems hid from the eyes of many worthy teachers in it, and valuable members of it. Is not this a sufficient reason why you, who so thoroughly understand the matter, should not remain silent—should not hide your talent in a napkin—but, with all the ability God has given you, endeavour to *reintroduce* this important doctrine into the Christian world? It would be doing an essential service to the church of Christ. Do consider and weigh the matter well. I would gladly hope a greater end than the profit of my soul is to be answered by what you have already written me upon the subject. That my *natural* and *constitutional* shyness is so con-

quered in writing to you I must resolve into the will of God for wise ends. But I will now change my subject from doctrine to experience, and mention the loving kindness of the Lord ; who not only disappoints my fears, but exceeds my expectations.

Since the memorable period already mentioned to you, my experience has consisted chiefly of a calm, sweet, uninterrupted fellowship with Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Till yesterday I felt a sensible increase of nearness to Jesus, which brought more love and a still clearer view of him. Help me to praise Him who deals so bountifully with me. How rich, how precious his kindness to me for months past ! Perhaps, without such a degree of it, I should have sunk into the mire of secular affairs ; in which I am still in some measure immersed : but I enjoy a nearer prospect of emerging than for some time past. I believe *duty* will call me to different parts of England this summer. I shall be glad to know where Providence casts your lot. It is a great source of satisfaction to me that the reins of providential government are continually in the hands of our God : it precludes anxiety and murmuring. Under such wise administration, there can be no just ground of complaint. In order to reconcile this with the liberty of the creature (for man must be a free agent, else he cannot be accountable) I have supposed the freedom of action was the privilege of man, but the *consequences* of these actions the peculiar prerogative of the Most High : and having the absolute disposal of *these*, he is, with great propriety, styled the moral Governor of the world. But, to waive this digression, I would return to a still more delightful subject—I mean divine love. I believe *humble love* is the highest, choicest gift of Heaven. This I prefer to every thing else, and think no discovery, no manifestation whatever, can do me any good, but as it proves a means of confirming or increasing this holy, heavenly principle. I would be filled with this humble love. I still feel something wanting in my experience—I mean a clearer witness from the Spirit of the work of sanctification : I should then with more freedom speak *explicitly* of it. Surely He who hath done so much for me will not withhold this. O that he may enable me to sink into all the depths of humble love, and rise to all the heights of Christian confidence.

I shall be much obliged to you for a particular account of the best, managed Sunday schools : and am, Rev. sir,

Your faithful, humble servant in the Lord, D. MAXWELL.

TO THE REV. ALEXANDER MATHER.

June 21, 1787.

I feel constrained once more to resume my pen, for the pleasing employment of making mention of the loving kindness of Him whose goodness you have so long experienced. Last time

I wrote you, I studiously avoided professing any thing concerning the witness of the Spirit for sanctification, as I did not enjoy, at least, according to the judgment I had formed of it. That the Lord had condescended to increase my communion with heaven, I could not deny ;—that he had given me wonderful displays of his greatness, and power, and majesty, as God the Father, was also certain ;—that he had made Jesus, in all his mediatorial glory, in bright effulgence, often pass before me, and converse with me, was likewise matter of fact ;—and that he had shown me, by faith, the personality of the Holy Ghost, and in some measure explained that oneness of substance, equality of power and glory, that exists in the sacred Three, I was as morally certain as of my own existence : but to believe that sin was *all done away*, I had not evidence sufficient to convince me ; or, if at bottom there was a secret hope it might be so, yet I had no freedom to declare it to others. In this uncertain state I continued for some months, pleading earnestly with the Lord for that degree of evidence which would effectually banish every shadow of doubt. I cannot enumerate the numberless ways and means a gracious God took to conquer the remains of unbelief. Eternity alone can unfold the mystery of his matchless goodness to me. Suffice it to say that, last week, I felt increasing power to yield to the motions of the Spirit, which have since ripened into a divine testimony ; and I can no longer doubt that the bitter root is destroyed. In some small measure the fruit, as well as the Spirit, concurs in witnessing this to my soul. I know you will join me in praising Him who has dealt thus bountifully with me. I feel deeply conscious of my weakness, but no propensity to discouragement. I trust it will prove a happy preservative against those evils to which I may be now chiefly exposed. Did my time or yours permit, I could say much more, but I am obliged to conclude. I would only add, that *now* the Lord has made an entire conquest of a heart that has long wished to yield to him, but which has been prevented by listening to an enemy. I hope it will for ever remain in the hands of the right owner : and not only continue emptied of evil, but be also filled with all the communicable fulness of Jehovah. In haste, your faithful, humble servant,

D. MAXWELL.

P. S. My Sunday school was opened last Lord's day, containing thirty-one scholars. Pray for its prosperity. I have taken measures for opening another about twenty-five miles south of Edinburgh, under the inspection of Mr. Boyd, from England.

TO MISS RITCHIE.

Coates, June 26, 1787.

DEAR MISS RITCHIE,—As you have kindly taken an interest in my spiritual concerns for some years, I feel a call to inform

you of the great goodness of the Lord to my soul for some months past. Indeed, it is more than human language can express. Since January last, he has been sensibly increasing my little stock ; not only making wonderful discoveries to me of the glory of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, as distinct persons, yet the same in substance, equal in power and glory ; but also allowing me such nearness to, and deep communion with the sacred Three, as was at times almost too much for the clay tenement, and seemed in a great measure to break off my connection with mortality. O the heavenly, the inexpressibly delightful interviews with the Lord Jesus with which I have often been lately indulged. I cannot convey any adequate idea of them ; perhaps your own experience will much better inform you. At times the solemn grandeur of heavenly majesty was sweetly tempered and softened by redeeming love. At other seasons I have been called to stand in the presence of the most high God himself : then sacred awe filled my soul, and all around seemed filled with the presence of Jehovah ; I felt as if I stood on holy ground. At other times, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost have so surrounded me as made me to prove, in the full extent of the words, the “overwhelming power of saving grace.” This last manifestation was in April last, when partaking of the Lord’s supper, and continued for many weeks ; a measure of it I still enjoy. Numberless have been the gracious visits I have been favoured with since then, but still I was not satisfied : the Spirit did not witness the destruction of sin, and without it I could not rest : yet I felt very thankful for what the Lord has done for me. I had often a secret hope that I had received the blessing, but durst not say so to others ; and the enemy did all in his power to prevent me. At times the whole powers of darkness seemed let loose upon me, and then I went through the most painful exercises of mind, yet felt as if strengthened to endure a greater agony. But He who is rich in mercy did not permit these severe conflicts to last long : in due time he rebuked the adversary, and poured the healing balm of his love into my soul. Again I went on my way rejoicing, wrestling in prayer for that degree of *unequivocal evidence* of sanctification which would fully satisfy both myself and others. The Lord used various means to conquer the last remains of unbelief. For some days I felt him powerfully and sweetly at work upon my soul. I obtained increasing power to yield to the motions of the Spirit, and in a very short time they terminated in a clear witness. This, through mercy, has abode with me ever since. I can now no longer doubt that the bitter root is destroyed. A small measure of the fruit concurs in bearing this testimony. How shall I sufficiently praise Him who has dealt thus wonderfully with me ; and so seasonably timed these great and glorious displays of his love and power when I was necessarily so thoroughly occupied

with secular affairs as might have proved very detrimental to my soul. O the height and depth of redeeming love! What angel tongue can tell. Did my time permit, I could have said much more, but business calls. In haste, with Christian love,
D. MAXWELL.

TO MISS RITCHIE.

Coates, July 25, 1787.

Having hinted in former letters that the Lord did not witness by his Spirit to the work of sanctification which he had wrought in my soul, his goodness now constrains me to say this is no longer the case. He shines now with meridian brightness upon his own work. There, in his light, I see light, and feel *full* liberty to testify that the bitter root is destroyed. How shall I sufficiently praise Him who has dealt thus graciously with me. The wonderful displays of the power, glory, and goodness of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, which I have enjoyed since the commencement of this year, though matter of unspeakable thankfulness, could in nowise satisfy while a doubt remained that the Canaanites were not wholly driven out of the land. For this I besought the Lord, with a degree of importunity his own Spirit bestowed; therefore he heard the prayer, and, for the sake of Jesus, gave me the desire of my heart. I am now brought into the wealthy place; kept in the immediate presence of Jehovah; privileged to see the King in his beauty, with the land that is afar off; enjoying the continual abode of his Spirit; surrounded with the peaceful presence of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and have, in a small measure, the depths of the Godhead made known to me. But over all his glory my God has created a defence, by giving me *deeply* to feel that I *only stand by faith*. I rejoice with trembling sweetly tempered with that perfect love that casteth out fear. Through the tender mercy of my God, thus emptied of evil, I look forward, and enjoy the soul-animating prospect of being filled with all the communicable fulness of Jehovah. You will, I know, cordially join with me in offering up the willing tribute of praise so justly due to our God, who has at last made an entire conquest of a heart that has long wished to prove his utmost salvation and fulness of love. But business calls, and I must answer. The Lord has *fully* convinced me that the work is *his*; he has reserved *it* for me, brought me to *it*, and gives me to believe (however, in one sense, unequal to the task) he will carry me through it, unblamable in his sight, and irreprovable before man. It is the doing of the Lord, and may well be marvellous in my sight. That you may feel a growing power to glorify and enjoy your God; that I may "stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made me free," and hourly add to my little stock—be active and zealous,

faithful and fruitful :—let us, with a holy importunity, night and day, wrestle with the Hearer of prayer, and he will answer us, for ourselves, and for the prosperity of his Zion. Permit me also to recommend to your earnest prayers my youngest brother, who lies dangerously ill, and, I fear, not prepared for the great change. Believe me, dear Miss Ritchie, with Christian love,
Your fellow traveller to the New Jerusalem,

D. MAXWELL.

TO THE REV. ALEXANDER MATHER.

September 7, 1787.

REV. SIR,—I intended sooner to thank you for your attention in sending the rules for the Sunday schools : but have been much and necessarily occupied in that business the Lord has committed to me. But O, what cause of thankfulness, that, with Martha's careful hands, he also gives me Mary's loving heart. I still have fresh, yea, daily cause to tell of the loving kindness of the Lord. He continues his goodness, he repeats the remarkable manifestations of his love, as flowing from the sacred Three ; distinctly discovered by faith as separate persons, yet inexplicably united. My soul is abundantly more established in the grace given than when I last wrote you. I now enjoy the constant, dare I say, the full abode of the Spirit ? Perhaps that is going too far : I would rather err on the safe side. Yet I feel liberty to say, *Father, Son, and Holy Ghost* continually encamp around me : and

“ Not a cloud does arise to darken the skies,
Or hide, for a moment, the Lord from my eyes.”

Wherever I move I meet the object of my love. I left Scotland on Tuesday last : and have since been in constant motion ; daily conversing with different persons, and engaged in various business : yet, through the abundant goodness of my God, my mind is not in the least deranged by these diversified scenes. “ O wondrous power of sovereign grace !”

I am glad to find by letters from Mr. Wesley and Dr. Coke, at Guernsey, that the prospect opens so fair and extensive for the spread of the gospel in the West India islands. May the time speedily commence when all the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our God and his Christ. Within these few months I have opened three Sunday schools, upon the plan you sent me : two in England, and one in Scotland. May the Lord succeed every attempt to promote his cause in the world. With Christian good wishes to Mrs. Mather and yourself, I remain, Rev. sir,

Your obliged, humble servant, and friend in Jesus,

D. MAXWELL.

TO THE REV. C. ATMORE, GLASGOW.

Coates, October 10, 1787.

I am pleased to see by your letter that your gracious God is owning your labours and comforting your own soul. Shall I congratulate you upon a complete victory over all your inward foes? Are the Canaanites wholly driven out of the land? If so, I would say, Hail, happy soul! whose heart is now a quiet dwelling,

"Where only Christ is heard to speak,
Where Jesus reigns alone."

If otherwise, permit me to say, O rest not till thus blessed! Cry earnestly to God, and the Lord, whom ye seek, will suddenly come to his temple, never more to depart.

I am a witness of his faithfulness and power. I proved a mighty exertion of both in my little excursion to the south; when, in the diversified scenes I went through, all the powers of action both of body and mind were called forth, and kept on the stretch sometimes from morning until night. Yet, through the tender mercy of my God, my mind was preserved uniformly stayed upon himself; my fellowship, without interruption, was with the Father and the Son; and my evidence for sanctification strong as a cable fixed to an immovable rock, and bright as the sun shining at noonday! This was the Lord's doing, and truly wonderful in my eyes. What shall I, what can I render unto the Lord for all his goodness? O may my future life speak his praise, and evince my gratitude.

Since I came home the Lord has been very gracious. While I now write I feel a sweet sense of the presence of God. I thus write, not to make known my own attainments, but for the encouragement of others, and to the glory of the Giver of every good and perfect gift.

When God is at work, either among a people or in the heart of an individual, the adversary of souls is peculiarly at work also: a belief of the former should prevent discouragement, and a fear of the latter stir up to much prayer! O the power of faithful prayer! I live by prayer. May you prove its sovereign efficacy in every difficult case, and find the apostle's request for the Colossians (chap. i, 9, 10) answered in your own soul. I am pleased to hear that Mrs. Atmore's sphere of usefulness is enlarged, and her soul happy.

Enclosed is the widow's mite toward liquidating the debt incurred by erecting galleries. We go on much as usual in Edinburgh. More life is much wanted. May the Lord pour out his Spirit! then the barren wilderness shall become a fruitful field.

Repeated interruptions, &c., oblige me to conclude. Praying

for peace and prosperity among your people, and the continuance of both in your own and Mrs. Atmore's soul, I am, Rev. sir,

Your faithful, humble servant in Christ, D. MAXWELL.

P. S. I have many demands, yet, if funds are low, add another guinea, and I will repay it.

TO THE REV. ALEXANDER MATHER.

December 1, 1787.

What has become of Mr. Mather, my profitable correspondent ? I should suppose my last has never come to hand, as it is now about two months since I wrote, and have had no reply. In my letter I mentioned a small excursion I had made into England upon business ; but I went no farther than Workington, in Cumberland, and of consequence had little profitable intercourse with Christians ; yet experienced much, very much, of the delightful and gracious presence of my God, even in that barren clime. I find his mercy sweetens every toil, makes every region please ; and since I came home, the Lord has wonderfully exerted his omnipotent power in carrying me over mountains of difficulties in my important engagement, and through pretty severe exercises of mind : in both I proved my God a present help, a strong hold in the day of trouble. Often, after these trying seasons, he, as it were, rends the heavens and comes down ; appears in majesty divine ; puts my foes to flight, and drowns all my fears and painful feelings in the ocean of redeeming love. At other times, when, perhaps for hours, I have been necessarily engaged in secular affairs, a fear has arisen, lest by so doing I should sink from that happy state into which I have been brought : then, quick as lightning, Jesus appears himself ; comes down as rain upon the mown grass ; makes my soul as the chariots of Amiadab ; and strengthens me to leap over a wall, or to overcome a troop. Sometimes, when meditating upon what the Lord has done for me, or when hearing the word preached, the sacred Three draw near as distinct persons, and yet, to my view and apprehension, *one*, in a manner inexplicable. I much wish to improve these gracious visitations to the utmost. My soul, night and day, feeds upon the word of God in secret, which, with prayer, is the means from which I reap most profit. You see how freely I still write, having given you an abstract of the Lord's dealings with me for months past.

I believe, if the Lord will, I shall be obliged to go to Bristol some time in the end of January, or beginning of February, upon Lady Glenorchy's chapel business. It is to be opened about that time. This is a new concern, and I feel a little awkward in it ; but, being called to it, I must endeavour to go through with it as the Lord shall assist. There is a depth in providence in this dispensation I have not yet been able to fathom. I find the line,

both of reason and faith, too short to get to the bottom of it ; but I leave it to the Lord, and only wish to fulfil his will in it. With my best wishes to Mrs. Mather, I remain, Rev. sir,

Your faithful, humble servant,

D. MAXWELL.

CHAPTER XXIII.—1788.

Particulars respecting Hope Chapel—Lady Maxwell visits Bristol—Forms an intimacy with Mrs. E. Johnson—Short account of—Correspondence continued.

LAND had been purchased, by the joint benevolence of the Ladies Glenorchy and Hope, on which to erect a chapel at the Hot Wells, near Bristol. These ladies had frequently visited this place ; not to unite in the frivolities of fashionable life, but solely to seek for benefit from the long famed salubrity of its waters. They had witnessed the dissipation and folly which reigned triumphant throughout all ranks, with sincere regret ; and lamented the want of an awakening and spiritual ministry, and the paucity of places for the public worship of God, at a situation where hundreds annually resort who particularly need the consolations of the gospel. Influenced by these impressions, they determined on the erection of a chapel ; but before they could accomplish their pious design they were both called to the joy of their Lord. By the appointment of Lady Glenorchy it became the duty of Lady Maxwell to carry this design into effect. After all the arrangements which could be made by means of letters, she hastened to the spot, personally to examine into every particular connected with the business, and to adopt measures best calculated to secure the objects aimed at by her departed friends. She left Edinburgh on the 11th of October in this year, and after inspecting the various chapels under her care, which lay on her road, arrived at Bristol on the 27th. She entered into the concern under much discouragement, but with confidence that as the cause was the Lord's he would favour her with all necessary and seasonable assistance. She had to encounter many and great difficulties, but was enabled to surmount them : though she has not either in her diary or correspondence stated particulars. The chapel, however, was ultimately erected, and being desirous to perpetuate the memory of her "dear daughter," she named it "Hope Chapel." This chapel, as will be seen, afterward became to her ladyship a source of painful solicitude : but, had we materials, it would be away from the object of this work to enter into any lengthened detail of its history. In her diary she has recorded several acts of kindness shown her by many Christian friends while at Bristol ; repeated pleasing interviews with Mr. Wesley ; and the close intimacy

which she formed with Mrs. Elizabeth Johnson, a maiden lady, at whose house she for some time resided.

This pious female was descended from an ancient and noble family. Her great grandfather was son to Counsellor Johnson, who was appointed master of the rolls to King Charles the Second. The residence of her father was at Chippenham, Wiltshire. She was the youngest of four children, one son and three daughters, and was born in June, 1721. From her infancy she feared God, but did not obtain an experimental knowledge of salvation, by the remission of sin through faith in the atoning blood, until near the close of the year 1744. Soon after this, she united herself to Mr. Wesley's society in Bristol, and was one of the first fruits of the extraordinary work of God, the light of which was then just dawning on the world. For above half a century she continued a steady, pious, consistent, and active member, adorning in all things the gospel of God her Saviour. During the greatest part of this period she resided with her eldest sister, Mrs. Mary Johnson, a lady of similar spirit, and they had one heart and one way. Like Lady Maxwell, her benevolence was bounded only by her abilities. In the earlier part of her religious life, she also, with Lady Maxwell, regretted her want of means to gratify the generous wishes of her heart; but, by the death of relatives, she received repeated accessions to her property; all of which she cheerfully devoted to the cause of God, and to the wants of the necessitous. In one instance twelve hundred pounds came into her possession, purposely to be distributed among the poor; and this labour of love was faithfully performed, and with delight and satisfaction, by her own hand. She died as she had lived, exulting through the blood of the Cross. About three o'clock on the morning of her death she endeavoured to repeat the apostle's triumphant exclamation, "I have fought"—but here her breath failed, and weakness forbade her finishing the blessed sentence, the import of which her heart experienced. About four, she cried out, "*Come—Lord—come—come,*" and a little after, "*Lord,*" with which word she sunk into the arms of her Redeemer. "Thus," says her biographer, "on the 18th of December, 1798, a few minutes before five in the morning, after near *fifty-five* years' close walk with God, Elizabeth Johnson obtained the summit of her wishes; the answer of her prayers; the end of her faith; the final salvation of her soul; and, as a ripe shock of corn, was gathered into the heavenly garner in the *seventy-eighth* year of her age. Her remains were interred on the 27th, in the family vault at Laycock, in Wiltshire." Many of the following letters will be found addressed to this eminent saint.

Having completed her work for the present at Bristol, Lady Maxwell again bent her course homeward. On her way she visited her friend and correspondent, Mr. Mather, at Wakefield,

and arrived in safety at Edinburgh on the 8th of November. Several of the subsequent epistles refer to the above particulars, and will sufficiently show what was the state of her ladyship's mind and heart in the midst of these multifarious engagements. And it will be seen that, while she was faithfully discharging the duties which devolved upon her in that part of the Lord's vineyard committed to her care, she was cheered and encouraged by hearing of the spread of the gospel and the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom in different parts of the world.

TO THE REV. C. ATMORE.

January 5, 1788.

For the comfort of your own soul, Rev. sir, and the good of others, I wish to give you a more accurate account of the Lord's work in different places, as communicated to me by two Christian friends in England, than I did yesterday. My information from Hull runs thus:—"The work of the Lord is greatly deepened in many hearts in this place lately. Five of our friends, within this last six weeks, are clearly brought into full liberty. They simply and freely testify that 'the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin.' Several are athirst for purity of heart, and I trust a cloud of witnesses will be raised up here, whose lives and humble, though open profession, will evince to all who know them that they are redeemed from sin." Thus far my friend at Hull. *Bolton*,—"The Lord seems to be going out of his common way to alarm and convert the children of men. Here eight returned thanks for pardon one Sabbath day: and seventeen young women belonging to the Sunday school were justified very lately. Many more have recently been brought in; some by being alarmed by visions in the night, and others by seeing the distress of some who were crying for pardon."

Mr. P. Cox, at Brunswick, writes, "Great news from Zion. Never was there so great a work in America, no, nor in any part of England, according to all the accounts in Mr. Wesley's journals, as is now in Brunswick and Sussex circuits. At many of our preaching places, we cannot meet the classes, on account of the cries of the distressed. Sometimes fifty in a day are truly converted to the living God. On the 26th and 27th of July our quarterly meeting for Brunswick was held at Mawburgh chapel, and on the 28th and 29th, for Sussex circuit, at Jones' chapel. It was thought, at the least computation, that during these four days there were between two and three hundred savingly brought to God. It is impossible for us to ascertain the numbers exactly; however, such a sight I never beheld before. The penitents lay in rows on the ground, crying for mercy at the hand of God; many of whom were the principal gentry of the country, and several of Dr. Cox's chief opposers when he bore his testimony against the slave trade."

Mr. Dickens writes from New-York, "August 27, 1787. I have very extraordinary things to communicate. The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in Virginia. It looks like the dawn of the millennium. I have received the most authentic intelligence that since our last conference several hundreds have been converted in Brunswick and Sussex circuits; and about Brunswick seven thousand souls are under deep conviction. The work is also very extraordinary in some parts of North Carolina, especially at and near Virginia, where the congregations on the Sabbath day consist of many thousands, and many of the greatest persecutors are struck down as dead. Surely this is the arm of Omnipotence."

Some parts of this account were transmitted to us before, but they will bear a repetition. O that the recital of them might warm, by the blessing of the Most High, the many cold hearts to be found in our northern climes. Yet, surely, our God was with us of a truth yesterday, and I feel him equally gracious to-day. Let us improve the favourable season, and wrestle for greater things. In a peculiar manner, I believe he waits to do us good at present. May you quickly prove and openly testify that "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin." I hope Mrs. Atmore also is athirst for this great blessing. I am, Rev. sir,

Your faithful, humble servant,

D. MAXWELL.

TO THE REV. ALEXANDER MATHER.

January 18, 1788.

Through the abounding goodness of my God, I am still constrained to testify of his loving kindness to my soul. The penury of mortal language prevents my doing justice to the grand and delightful subject: eternity alone can unfold the wondrous tale! O what heights and depths of redeeming love have I experienced since the commencement of 1787; and yet I seem to have but tasted of the cup of bliss. The pleasing, the delightful retrospect affords ample matter for wonder, love, and praise. I have sometimes, lately, endeavoured to measure back by contemplation the various steps whereby the Lord has led me, and caused his love to abound toward me, for these last twelve months; but my thoughts have often been recalled, and absorbed in present enjoyment. Shall I say with Kempis, "The Lord sees I am yet weak in love, therefore he visits me often." If I do, surely I must add, if this is a mark of weakness, let me never be without it. Solomon's inquiry, "Will God in very deed dwell with man on the earth?" I can from sweet experience quickly answer,—he will,—he does; for I dwell in love, and in God, and God in me. What shall I say to these things? It is the Lord's doing, and is truly marvellous in my eyes. O may my life, together

with my pen and lips, proclaim his goodness, and speak his praise.

His Spirit still witnesses to the work of sanctification ; but I daily prove that I only stand by faith. If at any time a doubt passes through my mind, it is not permitted to rest there. The Lord has again recourse, I may say, to signs and wonders, to confirm my faith. Then succeeds a sweet sinking into God : yea, into the Godhead's "deepest sea ;" and soon my soul breaks out in strong desire for all that God can give.

I see the *full assurance of hope** as something superior to what I now enjoy : and am led to press after it. You have walked over all this ground, I doubt not ; and can therefore point out the *straight* road to a traveller, who wishes to get quickly on, and to carry many with her. I do feel liberty, and endeavour, when Christian prudence permits, to speak and write upon the delightful theme that now engrosses my best thoughts ; although a variety of perplexing business sets a seal upon a large portion of my time. But divine love will not be kept under ; it will rise above every sorrow, every care, every fear, yea, every creature. It cannot rest short of God, its centre. O, how excellent a thing is love ! May it fill your soul and mine.

My journey to Bristol is delayed till April, by the dilatory proceedings of the architect of the chapel at the Hot Wells : you will not regret this. I am in a measure delivered from slavish fear, else I should shrink from the trials I may expect there. God has made me as certain as of my own existence that he has placed me where I now stand ; I therefore depend upon him for wisdom, strength, &c., &c. I feel as a little child in the business, perfectly unequal to the task : but I am aware it is the divine appointment and blessing alone that can give power and success to any instrument.

I wish to hear that Mrs. Mather is quite well again. She must not leave us for a long time yet. O that the Lord would raise up many witnesses blessed with her experience. May your bow abide in full strength, and the success of your labours increase with your years. I wish I had rhetoric sufficient to persuade you to take up your pen in the defence and support of a doctrine that seems at present too much neglected. Do think of it, and oblige, Rev. sir,

Your faithful, humble servant in Jesus,

D. MAXWELL.

TO THE REV. C. ATMORE, GLASGOW.

Coates, March 11, 1788.

Because He who is rich in mercy still gives the continued grace, I can, Rev. sir, answer your inquiry in the affirmative.

* See note, p. 282.

"My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit rejoiceth in God my Saviour." I have been, by the wise appointment of unerring Wisdom, afflicted in body, more so than for months, and still I am far from being well; hence I am much confined. In the former part of my illness I lay, as it were, becalmed in the bosom of love; but, in the latter part of it, the adversary was permitted to try every grain of grace. I was sifted as wheat: it was truly an emptying time. Yet *I stood*, because the everlasting arms were underneath me; and soon my God said, "It is enough." He rebuked the adversary, and the din of war ceased. I had peace in all my borders; yea, it flowed as a river. God the Father and Son came down as at the beginning, encircled me in the arms of redeeming love, and poured a flood of noon-day evidence into my soul for sanctification. Assist me to praise Him who deals thus tenderly and bountifully with me.

Yesterday my cup overflowed. I was called to see an old acquaintance, Lady J. M'Kensy: she was just upon the wing, ready to take her flight into the invisible world. In my way to town, O how exquisite was my enjoyment!—language fails to express it. Heaven seemed let down to earth. Jesus was intimately nigh, shining in all his mediatorial glory, with beams of sacred light. When I came to my friend, I found her in the full triumph of faith, exulting in her God. The curtain of mortality seemed drawn aside, and the glories of the eternal world were displayed. The terror of kings, and the king of terrors, was disarmed of all his terrors, and changed into a messenger, not only of peace, but of joy. It was truly a memorable season; for awhile we forgot almost that we were in the body. O, what has Jesus done for the sinful progeny of Adam! How far do the heights and depths of redeeming love exceed the grasp of our limited capacities! May we prove its utmost extent.

My soul springs forth in eager pursuit of what I have not yet attained. I do feel that God is

"—the spring of all my joys,
The life of my delights;
The glory of my brightest days,
And comfort of my nights."

Will you permit me to ask, Why are you so long, before you enter the promised land? You know the way: *all things are ready*. Let not the sweets of earthly comforts retard your progress. I should be glad if you could inform me in your next that both Mrs. Atmore and yourself are the happy inhabitants of that good land. It is, indeed,

"Favour'd with God's peculiar smile;
With every blessing blest."

I feel for Dumfries:—hinderances strew all the way; but God reigneth. Dalkeith also wears a *sombre* appearance. I rejoice

to think that the Lord can and hath promised to make a way for his church even in the wilderness, and streams in the desert. But business of various kinds calls, and I must answer.

With wishes for your spiritual prosperity, and also Mrs. Atmore's, I am, Rev. sir,

Your faithful, humble servant,

D. MAXWELL.

TO THE REV. ALEXANDER MATHER.

April 9, 1788.

Believing, Rev. sir, that you desire the prosperity of my soul, I feel sweetly constrained, for my own profit as well as your satisfaction, to inform you that, through the tender mercy of Him whose compassion faileth not, my soul is comfortably alive to God: still tasting his good word, and feeling the powers of the world to come. I am kept sweetly under the influence of divine truth, and favoured with many precious visits from on high; when the Deity deigns to converse with his creature, and to shine with peculiar brightness upon the work of sanctification in my soul. While thus

“Lost in the high enjoyment of his love,
What glorious mortal can my envy move?”

But this high and exquisite enjoyment is not my *constant* allowance: *that* is rather a calm, silent, sweet sinking into God. Yet I feel but a babe in perfect love. However, there is much reason for thankfulness; the work, so far as I have experienced it, is *clear*: and the babe is daily panting for the *maturity* and *stability* of a father, and is much encouraged to press on, by the tender dealings of a God of love, who wonderfully bears with many weaknesses.

The veil that covers unseen things from mortal eyes grows more transparent. I get clearer views of the eternal world; of the happiness of its blessed inhabitants. Yet, though thus highly favoured, I seem in one sense to *sink* daily in my own eyes; while in another I rise higher. I daily need to wash in the blood of Jesus; and prove it very strengthening and comfortable frequently, by faith, to plunge, as it were, into that sacred fountain; and renew the dedication of myself, with all I have and am, or ever shall have, to my God. He accepts the sacrifice! How great the condescension!

I believe nothing short of what the Lord has done for me would have proved sufficient for the very difficult task he has assigned me. I have such a multiplicity of things and persons to deal with, and attend to, and daily new trials arise; so that often all the strength of my body, with the whole powers of my mind, is called into exercise, and every grain of my grace is tried. I have to fight every inch of ground, not only without,

but sometimes within, when the powers of darkness are permitted, for wise ends, to molest me. Then I feel driven up to a corner; all human help fails, and I prove, in a *peculiar manner*, that I stand by faith: and even in that way, only by the mighty exertions of divine power in my behalf. *For the time*, faith seems stripped of all its fruits, and but for the *direct act*, whereby, in spite of men and devils I keep my hold of Christ, I should utterly fail; but, in general, these very trying seasons of inward distress are short; my God soon rebukes the adversary, and brings me again into the wealthy place, and I dwell within the veil. How shall I sufficiently praise him for all his goodness! But how little do I know of it, and of that depth of love there is in all his dispensations toward me. The very narrow limits of my capacity keep me blind to much of it *now*: but, when in eternity, if I should be permitted to look into the records of time, I shall know it better. What wisdom, what beauty, what goodness, shall I then discover in all his dealing with me! I am lost in the thought, but must not pursue it, having no more time to write, and perhaps you as little to read.

I hope Mrs. Mather is now well, and that you and she are advancing sweetly in the heavenly road, and carrying many with you, who shall be for a crown of joy and rejoicing in the day of the Lord. I see one of the ancient pillars of the building has given way, though it has of late years sustained no great weight. I hope the fabric will not feel any remarkable shock by its fall. Could you not be persuaded to spend a season in the land of your nativity, for the good of its inhabitants? Wishing Mrs. Mather and you the fullest possession of every new-covenant blessing, I remain, Rev. sir,

Your obliged, humble servant in Christ, D. MAXWELL.

TO THE REV. ALEXANDER MATHER.

June 27, 1788.

I should perhaps, for my own sake, Rev. sir, have sooner answered your last profitable letter, but I have now so many necessary and valuable claims upon my time, that I cannot do the things I would: however, I embrace a few leisure moments to ask after you and Mrs. Mather; and to say, I still prove that "*God is love.*" In saying this, I say all. How much does this include?—More than words can express.

Upon a retrospect of the last twelve months, I find infinite cause for praise and thanksgiving. I *then* received the clear witness for satisfaction; and since *then*, O what wonders of mercy has the Lord shown to me! Too many to recapitulate, however pleasing the recital would be. But, I trust, a lively sense of them will never be erased from my grateful heart.

Since I last wrote you, I have had some remarkable disco-

veries of the love, power, and goodness of Him who delighteth in the prosperity of his children. The invisible world hath been brought very nigh, with its blessed inhabitants. There seemed but a step between me and eternal glory. My God and Saviour felt just at hand. O what hath Jesus purchased for his people ! Even in this vale of tears how great their enjoyment ! What shall the full fruition of God be, when death is swallowed up of life ?

“ Say ye who best can tell, ye sons of light,
Angels, for ye enjoy it,”

and continually behold his face without a veil. This was a memorable season. I pray that it may produce gracious and permanent effects.

Since then I have had various trials, and numberless proofs of the power and love of God, in supporting me under, and carrying me through them : more especially lately in a very *capital one* ; much more than sufficient to have entirely overset me : and yet, by the good hand of my God upon me, I have been so carried above it, as not to feel one murmuring, or even desponding thought. Surely “ all things are possible to him that believeth.” Assist me to praise Him who deals so bountifully with me. And bear with me while I give you another instance of the astonishing goodness of the God whom we love.

On Wednesday last, I felt for some hours keen anguish of spirit, from a fear of having grieved the Holy Spirit. As a Christian, perhaps, you know the nature of this distress better than I can describe it ; if so, you well know that it is severe. Thus fearing, and thus feeling, how was my soul filled with astonishment and love, when, joining in prayer with a Christian friend or two, *God the Father* came down in solemn majesty, banished all my fears, and scattered all my grief. He shone clear to the eye of faith, and has abode thus with me, *even me*, ever since. About three minutes after this gracious visitation, the Lord Jesus drew nigh, as a distinct person, clearly manifesting himself as the second person of the holy Trinity. Prayers were then turned into praises ! How grateful, how holy, how humble, ought I to be ! I deeply feel my shortcomings ; but duty calls, and I must leave this delightful theme.

May you sink deeper than I have ever yet done into the ocean of redeeming love. It will yet be six weeks before I can get to England. With Christian remembrance to your valuable partner, I remain, Rev. sir,

Your obliged, humble servant,

D. MAXWELL.

TO THE REV. ALEXANDER MATHER.

Bristol, Sept. 8, 1788.

REV. SIR,—Not having it in my power to see you in my way hither, I have it at heart to meet you and Mrs. Mather in my return to Scotland. I see you are appointed for Wakefield: I will therefore endeavour, if the Lord will, to call on you there about four weeks hence. I cannot fix on any time *absolutely*, my hands are so full here; but I give you this hint, that you may, if you can, be at or near Wakefield near about that time.

A gracious God brought me here the 28th of last month. Being obliged to stop at Carlisle and Workington, I was about seventeen days between Edinburgh and this place,—in the course of which I had, through mercy, many rich displays of the wisdom, power, and goodness of a God of love; much delightful fellowship with the sacred Three; and irresistible evidence of the work of sanctification. But I had, also, at times, to grapple with the powers of darkness. I do not know that I ever formerly found the fiery darts of Satan so keenly pointed. They seemed to pierce, even to the dividing asunder the joints and marrow; but, being strengthened to endure temptation, I quickly received the crown of present victory, and went on my way rejoicing.

I believe you can enter fully into the trying peculiarity of my situation in this place, without any explanation on my part. Indeed, I almost feared to enter into the cloud: but *He* who knows the human heart knew I only wished to do *his will*, exclusive of every other consideration; and he has therefore mercifully disappointed my apprehensions. I have been privileged with much intercourse with Mr. Wesley in *public* and *private*, and with some precious souls in his connection; and also with the most kind reception, and every possible assistance, from those with whom I was called to have much intercourse respecting the business I came to transact. They expressed a high respect for Mr. Wesley, and behaved with Christian cordiality when they found him with me; which is matter of thankfulness.

I know you will be pleased to hear that the Lord is unspeakably gracious to my soul. Words can convey but a faint idea of what I enjoyed yesterday, both in public and private. God the Father came down in all the splendour of Deity, in solemn grandeur. The Majesty of heaven condescended to fill the place in which I sat (a private room with a choice friend) with his presence, and my heart with his love, and has thus abode with me ever since. I felt constrained to speak to the lady that was with me, and she also seemed full of God. About an hour after, when the name of Jesus was mentioned, he also condescended to visit me in a remarkable manner; shone gloriously forth as the second person of the blessed Trinity. He did indeed appear as altogether lovely, and conquered all my shyness and

taciturnity. How good is the Lord! If I add to all this, his great kindness in carrying me through many difficult matters—much perplexed business, which he only could teach me how to manage—how infinitely am I indebted! Do help me to praise him!

I will not now make any apology for such a large discourse on the chapter of self; having formerly explained myself on that head, I think you will not mistake me. With kind remembrance to Mrs. Mather, I remain, Rev. sir,

Your obliged servant in the Lord,

D. MAXWELL.

TO THE REV. ALEXANDER MATHER.

October, 1788.

I remember with satisfaction, Rev. sir, the short interview I had with you and Mrs. Mather at Wakefield. It was refreshing and animating. There is a peculiarity in my outward situation, and also in part of my experience, into which not many seem fitted to enter. On this account, I do not receive much benefit from the generality even of the Methodists. Indeed I do not find liberty to attempt an explanation to many of them. You are one of the very few who seem to understand me thoroughly as to *place, experience, views, &c.* Therefore the Lord, through this medium, often conveys to me comfort, strength, instruction, &c., for which I feel thankful. Could I repay you in kind, I would quickly extinguish the debt.

By the good hand of my God upon me I arrived safely at home, though not till the 8th, just in time to partake of the gospel feast: which proved indeed a feast of love, a season of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. With much sacred delight, and strong grateful sensations, I devoted afresh my spared life to His honour and glory who first gave it to me, and who has ever since kindly preserved it.

Words fail to inform you how much of his goodness my God has made to pass before me, since I left Bristol. I still feel an amazing poverty in human language, when I would speak of the deep things of God. This, I suppose, will always be the case. However, suffice it to say, on the road, the sacred Three compassed me about: I felt surrounded with the divine presence: my communion with Father, Son, and Holy Ghost was truly delightful. No *ecstatic joy*, but a divine *serenity*; a heaven of silent love; a *sinking into* God. This last expression I am peculiarly partial to, because, to my own apprehension at least, it conveys such a literal idea of the enjoyment I experience on these peculiarly happy seasons. Thus wonderfully aided, I passed equally on, through things painful and pleasant. By divine permission, with respect to outward things, the former prevailed at different places. I had some remarkably animating and

refreshing intercourse with Christians ; more especially at Leeds, Rippon, Darlington, and Alnwick. My mouth was wonderfully opened to declare what God had done for my soul : and on every such occasion I received a testimony from on high, yea, the most unequivocal evidence, that the efforts I made were peculiarly acceptable to Him for whose sake they were made.

Since I came home, though a very large proportion of my time has been necessarily filled up with business, I have been highly favoured with the presence of the ever blessed Trinity ; with sweet foretastes of future glory ; and Mount-Pisgah views of the heavenly Canaan : so that I hesitate not to say the Lord is deepening his work in my soul.

I do feel I stand in God, and cannot be confined to one party. My soul feels too much enlarged to admit of any exclusive charter. I consider real Christians, of every denomination, as a part of the great family of God ; as such, I would do them all the good I can, and take all the profit from them they can give me. Perhaps this extensive, unfettered view is necessary for the situation in which I am placed. But do not mistake me. I am at no loss *where* to rest the *preference* : there I am *perfectly decided*. My *experience*, as well as *judgment*, secures this. It is not necessary to say, I hope, I am quite safe in writing thus freely to you.

Were I not almost ashamed of having said so much on the chapter of self, I should add, I have, of late, experienced uncommon emptying seasons. These began some time before I left Bristol, and afterward increased. I felt quite broken down before the Lord—ashamed and confounded beyond expression, at the poor, wretched manner in which I had conducted the work at Bristol. I did, indeed, sink into the dust before the face of Jehovah, and lay very low at his feet, imploring pardon, (without one grain of condemnation, in the common acceptation of the word,) because I had come so sadly short in what, at his command, I had attempted. Soon after, I received an increase. O how good is our God !

I shall be pleased to hear that Mrs. Mather continues better, and that the work of God prospers in your hands and soul. The prayers of both will be esteemed a privilege by, Rev. sir,

Your obliged, humble servant in Christ, D. MAXWELL.

TO THE REV. ALEXANDER MATHER.

November 2, 1788.

“ Gold is tried in fire, and acceptable men in the furnace of adversity,” for such wise ends, and salutary purposes, as fully justify the divine procedure, and richly repay the sufferer. I hope Mr. Mather’s happy experience bears testimony to this truth. I shall be glad to hear that he is restored to former health and

usefulness, and that his path of *duty* is so clearly marked as to supersede the necessity of listening to any one for direction. I believe the soul that walks closely with God, will in most, if not in every case, have the line drawn for him by unerring Wisdom. Attending continually to an indwelling God, we hear the small, still voice, saying, "This is the way, walk ye in it."

I now begin to believe that the Lord's very gracious dealings with me are intended for higher purposes than merely the comfort of my own soul; and, therefore, do more frequently and explicitly than ever, endeavour to tell those that fear God what he has done for me; if, peradventure, the simple recital may be in the smallest degree profitable to them; though herein Satan withstands me greatly. Yet, upon every proper occasion, I endeavour, in weakness, to offer it up as a sacrifice to my God (with a single eye to his glory) upon that altar which alone can sanctify the gift. I feel more than ever called to wrestle in mighty prayer for the prosperity of Zion; more especially for some particular souls: and this morning, I think I obtained *faith* for *one*, together with the *strongest hopes* for many, who all so pressed upon me, so crowded before me, while in secret before the Lord, that a necessity was laid upon me, by the Hearer of prayer himself, to be importunate for them: but for *all*, *one blessing only* was in view,—entire sanctification; or what we sometimes call *Christian perfection*.

This important doctrine of our holy religion, more especially as it relates to experience, now almost wholly occupies my mind; at least, all the time I can spare from business, &c., &c.: and I really think the Lord has prepared a people here for entering the good land. O that he would bring them in! Assist them by your prayers. The injurious bar of unbelief prevents their taking immediate possession, not seeing clearly it is by simple faith alone.

How shall I sufficiently praise the Lord that I am still a happy inhabitant of that delightful land? Still struggling to scale the mount of holiest love, I have gained some steps, but feel restless to reach the summit. My God is to me as a place of broad rivers, wide and deep. I rest in him; I dwell in him. Sinking into him, I lose myself; and prove a life of fellowship with Deity so divinely sweet, I would not relinquish it for a thousand worlds. It is, indeed, a narrow path; but love levels every mountain—makes all easy.

"O love divine, how sweet thou art!"

When I look back, I rejoice to see what I am saved from: when I look forward, it is all pure expanse of unbounded love. Surely the heaven of heavens is love.

May you, more than ever, find this divine principle overflowing your soul; sweetening every bitter cup; making every bur-

then light. But I am called away, and must conclude by saying I would hope your remaining years will be peculiarly devoted to the interests of *Christian perfection*; promoting it by every possible means; and may the Lord succeed your every attempt, prays, Rev. sir,

Your obliged, humble servant in Jesus, D. MAXWELL.

CHAPTER XXIV.—1789.

Lady Maxwell's multifarious engagements—Diary continued—Again visits Bristol—Meets with many perplexities respecting Hope Chapel.

LADY MAXWELL'S engagements during this year were so numerous and important, that she had but little leisure left for friendly correspondence. The care of many of the churches now devolved upon her; and the constant attention which these demanded, nearly absorbed the whole of her time. To one of her friends she thus apologizes for long silence:—"I have often wished, and intended to write you, but have been prevented. Though the pen is necessarily and almost constantly in my hand, even to the injury of my health, I can seldom enjoy the privilege of writing to a Christian friend. My peculiar situation deprives me of many privileges. How, then, can I sufficiently adore the goodness, and admire the power, that, while thus situated, keep my soul alive to divine things." But though she was thus obliged to remit all avoidable correspondence, she continued her diary nearly with as much frequency and fulness as ever. To this, therefore, we shall, for this year, again have recourse. And surely it must be encouraging to every faithful and laborious servant of Jesus to observe, in the experience of this eminent saint, such a remarkable accomplishment of that precious promise:—"My grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness."

January 25. Still I have cause to sing of mercy. My God is still gracious in secret and public, opens my mouth in his cause, and makes my pen move swiftly upon the delightful theme. He enables me to devise liberal things for my fellow creatures, and draws out my soul to the stranger, the ignorant, and the poor; and enables me to go on my way rejoicing. The trials which he permits, he supports me under, and delivers me from; frequently disappointing my fears. But I feel ashamed I do not make greater progress; that my love is so cold; that I come so continually short. Yet my God bears with me in the most tender manner. O the height and depth of redeeming love! Still the Bible is a source of uncommon comfort and profit to me, and still I have sweet times of refreshing in secret prayer.

February 7. Innumerable opportunities are now given me for promoting the temporal and spiritual good of my fellow creatures. I am not permitted to reason, and thereby weaken my own hands, by considering how inadequate the instrument to the arduous task of producing permanent good. *Duty* is mine; *events* are the Lord's. Still I walk in the light of a luminous faith for sanctification: though in a much lower degree than many highly favoured ones; but I am sweetly invited daily to come up higher.

— 23. Had a sweet, though short visit from on high this day, a precious touch of the love of Jesus. Hearing from the pulpit yesterday of the too common evil of the Christian falling from his first love, I was led to examine my own experience on this point; and, after a review of the years which have elapsed since I first knew the pardoning love of God, I find, if my heart does not deceive me, reason to conclude I have not lost my first love; yet have much cause to lament that I have not made greater progress in the Christian faith; and, also, to admire the long-suffering patience of a gracious God and his tender dealings with me. O for a heart and life to praise him as I would and ought.

April 11. I feel ashamed that, though time passes quickly away, I do little to purpose in the course of it. I feel at times deeply humbled on this account, even when the Lord is gracious. O my God, strengthen my hands herein; make me as active, and as zealous, and as useful, as humanity and my particular situation will admit. I would fain crowd as much work as possible into my little span of life. Lord, let not the ghost of murdered or wasted time haunt me on a deathbed.

— 15. Much with others; might have been more spiritual in my conversation. Had many temporal things to mention; but, though the end was good, I erred in the time spent in them. In general, I find it best to carry all my matters to a throne of grace, and to obtain direction from the Source of wisdom: yet, I must confess the Lord often teaches me through the medium of the creature. I cannot, therefore, condemn the measure, but only wish to have the line drawn for me by Him with whom is the residue of the Spirit. I felt humbled for my mistakes, and shortcomings; yet the Lord was good, and showed me the more excellent way. O that henceforward I may walk in it, and always find rest to my soul.

May 20. O what cause to praise redeeming mercy. My communion with God the Father and Son has been, in a very peculiar manner, inexpressibly delightful. I have been strengthened by it, both in body and mind; and carried through much trying and perplexed business with ease. When the enemy would have poured in, his temptation found no place in me: in the same moment I found myself lifted up, God himself was at

my right hand, and poured his love into my soul. How unworthy of all this love. I would lie low before my God. I feel his will very precious, and his word a source of much profit, strength, and comfort to my mind.

June 7. Since last date I have been struggling through various trials. The daily exertion of divine power keeps me standing. All my victories are obtained through that strength, and leave me conscious of my own weakness, and under great obligations to redeeming love: with much desire to ascribe all the glory where alone it is due. This morning, in my way to the house of God, I had some delightful views of, and sweet meditations upon, the great privilege of having God as my Father; and went with an intention of renewing my engagements to be the Lord's at his own table. When there was unexpectedly taken ill, and much tempted. I asked for leave to stay till I had communed, which was granted. At the table the Lord was unspeakably gracious: I saw his fulness; I felt it; I sunk sweetly into him. Father and Son felt very sensibly nigh: it was a precious season.

— 28. Toiled all day, but caught little till the evening. I then got a view of the fulness of God, and felt sinking into it. I long for deeper impressions of divine things. I would be more solemn,—every moment pierced with a sense of the divine presence. I would be filled with the *full assurance of hope unto the end*.* I do most things too quickly: speaking, thinking, praying, reading. The Lord, in tender compassion, shows me the most excellent way in all things, but I learn slowly, and have reason to admire his patience. O for a heart to praise him more!

July 3. This day, also, has proved a good time, though confined to bed. In the evening my cup overflowed, and I was constrained to tell those who desire to love the Lord, what he had done, and was doing for my soul. How unwearied his kindness. How numberless my obligations! I am confounded when I think of my unworthiness, of my shortcomings, and how little love I have to this gracious God after all he has done. But the more I meditate upon these humiliating circumstances the more he increases his kindness to me. Eternity alone can unfold the wondrous tale. It is more than mortal language can express, or human thought conceive. But O, eternity will in some measure capacitate for glorifying and enjoying this source of bliss!

— 10. Much business of various kinds has fallen to be

* "I believe," says Mr. Wesley, "a few, but very few Christians have an assurance from God of everlasting salvation; and that is the thing which the apostle terms *the plerophory*, or *full assurance of hope*."

"I believe more have such an assurance of being *now* in the favour of God as excludes all doubt and fear. And this, if I do not mistake, the apostle means by *the plerophory*, or *full assurance of faith*."

done these days past. I am a wonder to myself. Unable to do any thing of myself to purpose, yet called to do much. I trust all is of God, who guides my pen, my tongue, my heart. As one proof of this, he keeps my mind above all, and with himself; entirely dependent upon himself. O, what oil to the wheels of the soul do I find divine love! Without this, I should indeed drive heavily on, if I did not stop altogether. I have had many opportunities for promoting the spiritual interests of others lately; and my soul has panted with generous desires to embrace them all, and many more. *Real* religion enlarges the heart in good will to all; here is no monopoly, no exclusive charter, wished for in this business. Have felt to-day rather suspicious that I am not, at present, in my place, respecting the management of part of the affairs committed to me, which lies at a great distance. Surely the Lord will direct a soul he has made so desirous to do his will in all things.

— 24. My God rejoiceth over me to do me good from day to day. In secret prayer, this morning, Jesus drew delightfully nigh. He is my soul's bright morning star; he carries me through every difficulty. Looking to him, mountains melt down to mole hills, and rough places are made smooth.

“O Lamb of God, was ever pain,
Was ever love like thine.”

The cloud now seems decidedly to point to the south; and my mind seems more reconciled to the various trials of a long journey. The will of my God is precious, whatever aspect it wears. I am *his*, and would go, or stay, or suffer what he appoints.

Being fully satisfied that the finger of Providence again pointed to Bristol, Lady Maxwell left Edinburgh on the 17th of August. She travelled by short stages; and at every place where she rested endeavoured, as usual, to promote the cause of religion. She arrived at Noble-house the first night, “worn out by excessive fatigue before leaving home: but here a sphere of usefulness soon presented itself,” and this animated and quickened her “languid powers.” The next day she reached Moffat. “Many opportunities offered on the road, and were thankfully embraced;” but in this town the “prospect of good was dark and discouraging.” Passing through Penrith and Shap, she reached Burton on Saturday night, the 21st. The next day she wrote:—“Was confined to bed all the morning, but had a precious time. My mouth was opened to speak of and for the Lord; and I was favoured with many opportunities to act for him.” She has not recorded the course of her journeying the following week; but, on Friday the 28th, we find her at Wolverhampton, where she made the following entry in her diary:—“Since my last date at Burton, I have gone over much ground,

and at every place endeavoured to bear my testimony, in a small degree, for Jesus. Except at particular times, my joy has not been so great. I have been kept in peace—my evidences wonderfully clear for sanctification—so as to surprise myself, and to stimulate me to do all I could for that God who does so much for me. When thus employed I am in my element, though Satan strongly opposes. This day, a piercing consciousness of my shortcomings and great unworthiness has humbled and broken me down before God. I perceive such a want of wisdom, judgment, and indeed every thing which might lead to self-applause—or to a trusting in any thing short of God himself, for direction in every thought, word, and action—as to make me stand astonished that he should bear with me. O what a bottomless abyss is redeeming love. For hours, while under this humbling exercise of mind, God the Father and Son drew sweetly nigh, and melted down my heart into a very tender frame, and drew out my soul in strong desires for more love, more heavenly wisdom, and great increase of divine life.”

On the second of September her ladyship arrived at Bristol, under a lively sense of the divine goodness. The next day she wrote: “Through much mercy, came here last night, brought through many fears, dangers, and trials. Words fail to say how gracious the Lord has been to me. How he strengthens my trust in him, my expectations from him, and my confidence in what he has wrought in me, with respect to sanctification! He comforts me much in reference to his work in this place; so that I do expect he will appear in my behalf, and carry me through every difficulty.”

Lady Maxwell continued in Bristol until the 20th of October. She had much perplexing and harassing business, which kept her constantly employed; but was also favoured with much divine support. Many things tending to obstruct the work in which she was engaged were happily removed, and an increase of pecuniary aid was afforded. The following extract, written on her arrival at home, affords farther light on the objects of this journey: “Left Bristol Hot-Wells on the 20th of October. I have much cause to bless the Lord for his goodness to me while there, and for his remarkable interpositions in behalf of his work at the Wells: particularly in inclining the heart of the heir-at-law to do all I asked, and in the way I proposed. Without this I could not have gone on. The Lord was with me of a truth; melted down mountains of difficulty, and brought wonderful things to pass. This was agreeable to the hopes he had given me before I left home. He is a faithful God: with truth I may set my seal to this. After travelling upward of four hundred miles with my own horses, through much bad road, and sometimes under heavy rains and high winds, he brought me in health and peace to my own habitation on the 7th of November. On the road home he gave

me many opportunities for promoting the spiritual and temporal interests of my fellow creatures, and many comfortable and profitable interviews with Christians. May an effectual blessing attend both."

The following extracts will conduct to the close of this year :

"Dec. 17. My comfort was sensibly increased this morning, and the testimony of the Holy Spirit clear ; more especially after midday, my fellowship with the sacred Three was most delightful. I was favoured with another clear view of the holy Trinity ; and from the abundance of my heart, my mouth spoke to those about me of the witness of divine love, and the support it afforded in the day of trouble. But, O Lord, do thou enlarge my spiritual borders, and enable me to glorify thee. Fill me with holy, humble love. Let love command my heart, and fully govern my life ; let love be the spring and rule of action in my soul ; then shall I, more than ever, put on bowels of compassion and tenderness to all.

"—— 25. Devoted myself, as usual upon this day, to *Him* whose I am, and whom I wish to serve. I went with sweet desire and expectation to his house to thank him for his unspeakable gift ; but my vast desires were not fully satisfied. Returned again in the evening, but still I looked for more than I received. Yet I am sensible, from unequivocal evidence, that the work of grace is advancing in my soul. O my God, let every nerve be on the stretch for thee. May Jesus be all the world to me, and all my soul be love. How great the mystery of godliness ; 'Christ manifest in the flesh !' The everlasting Father, the Prince of peace, becoming a child clothed with humanity ! The short line of human reason cannot sound this bottomless abyss of mercy ; it is too deep for us. Nor does God mean that we should lose our plummet in the depths of Deity ; but that we should believe, love, and obey, through his almighty power."

CHAPTER XXV.—1790.

Correspondence resumed with Mr. Mather, Mrs. Johnson, and Miss Ritchie—Lady Maxwell visits Carlisle, Wigton, and Workington.

WE shall now again recur to Lady Maxwell's correspondence. Though her diary enters into greater detail relative to her religious experience, and is much more circumstantial, yet the following letters substantially embrace what she has there recorded ; while, at the same time, they glance at other interesting particulars which are not elsewhere noticed. There is, besides, a fascinating charm in an epistolary communication of sentiment and feeling, which it is believed will be more interesting to the generality of readers.

TO THE REV. ALEXANDER MATHER.

January 16, 1790.

Mr. Mather's letter presents an agreeable picture of a mind tenderly sensible to a recent loss ; yet, *through grace*, rising superior to these natural feelings, and thereby preserved from excessive sorrow : this alone can lead us to that happy medium which God allows ; we are unable of ourselves to draw the line. Nature is prone to excess ; and the boundaries between right and wrong, like those of light and shade, are separated by very narrow and almost imperceptible limits. There is certainly nothing which proves such an effectual preservative against whatever would either more immediately or remotely tend to hurt the soul, as having God the object of our supreme affection, reigning without a rival in the heart. The magnetic virtue of this powerful attractive draws all the affectionate powers of the soul to one point ; and permanently fixes them upon their divine centre—similar to the effects of a convex lens, which, when drawn to its proper focus, collects the scattered rays of the sun, which while diffused produce little heat, but when thus concentrated kindle a fire that consumes whatever comes in its way. Who would not wish to feel the purifying force of this sacred flame, burning up all their dross.

Though not yet an entire convert to the doctrine of your last upon the chapter of *self*, I so far allow of what you have said, that I may with impunity let you know a few particulars. I have had lately an uncommonly severe conflict with the combined powers of darkness ; who, for wise ends, have been permitted to try me to the uttermost. I found all the grace which I had hitherto received would be by far too little to bring me off victorious, without a remarkable interposition of Him who is stronger than man, devils, and sin. While wrestling, not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, and powers, and spiritual wickednesses in high places, I endeavoured to assert my privileges ; and, by simple faith, to hold fast what had been freely bestowed, sensibly received, and long and comfortably enjoyed. A temporary cessation of arms seemed to take place ; but the instant this exercise was intermitted, my foes renewed their attack with redoubled fury, and roared upon me as so many bulls of Bashan. This, more than ever, convinced me of the sterling value of faith ; as being the only successful weapon with which to fight the battles of the Lord. But, lest I be too tedious by attempting to detail the various circumstances of this serious engagement, suffice it to say, after many hours of distress, in the course of which I was not suffered to yield a hair's breadth to my enemies, I obtained a final victory. A heavenly calm succeeded, and I had peace in all my borders. For this I was very thankful, and at the time did not look for more ; but He who is

rich in mercy had prepared greater things : *Jehovah* himself came down in solemn majesty. My inmost soul felt pierced with a deep sense of his presence ; while he permitted me to enjoy deep communion with himself. Here was indeed a “ heaven of love, and all that sacred awe that dares not move.” A few minutes’ enjoyment of such an agreeable interview would have been a great blessing ; but what praise is due to Him who has continued it till now, which is five days. Still the Most High thus abides with me. Be astonished, O heavens ! The day after this extraordinary visit being the Lord’s day, I had an opportunity of partaking of the solemn ordinance of the supper. Here my allowance was much larger. While at the sacred table I felt not only joined in spirit to the general assembly of the first-born, but, by faith, *as one of them*. Heaven appeared open, to give a view of the blessed inhabitants : and for some minutes the music of the glorious place seemed to sound in my ears : immediately after, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost sensibly encamped about me. I felt surrounded with Deity in all its plenitude of love and power—lost in wonder, love, and praise—swallowed up in the inexpressible enjoyment of the beatific vision. How good is God ! Assist me to praise him, and to gain every possible advantage by this recent instance of his love—the account of which, for want of time, and from many interruptions, is very defective ; but the mantle of love must cover every inaccuracy.

May you feel your every want fully supplied by God. Enjoying him, what finite good can make an addition. As a professional gentleman, I hear your son meets with approbation and success :—may he shine in a nobler science—be constrained to receive the truth, not merely as a system of doctrines, but as a vital, energetic principle, that shall change his heart, renew his mind, and produce a beautiful uniformity of conduct and respectability of character. So that at last he may receive the divine plaudit, “ Well done.”

D. MAXWELL.

TO MRS. JOHNSON.

May 26, 1790.

I take the opportunity of a frank to inquire after the welfare of my sister in Jesus, and how the work of my Lord prospers in her hands ? Also to inform her that he is getting himself glory here in the hearts of both saints and sinners ; and this even through the feeble instrumentality of the unworthy individual that now communicates the pleasing intelligence.

For some time I have met a few young women on the Lord’s day, who appeared athirst for *full* salvation. From time to time I simply told them what the Lord had done for my own soul ; and what he was willing to do for them. I found them daily laid upon my mind in prayer ; and the last time I met them, while

pleading that the Lord would raise them up as witnesses of his power to save to the uttermost, one was set at full liberty : and I expect, at next opportunity, to find that others have been enabled to follow her example. Help me to praise a gracious God for his goodness. My heart is filled with gratitude.

He has also given me to see the fruit of my affectionate advice, with respect to two of our preachers, who are both athirst for perfect love. Help them by your prayers. He is wonderfully and delightfully present in the little class which the preachers meet in my house, and opens my mouth to speak explicitly before them of the work he has wrought in my own soul. This they receive with gladness, and the Lord bears testimony to the truth in their hearts, and gives me a present reward as a proof of his approbation. O let us bless Him who is working so wonderfully.

I have a pleasing hope of this being the beginning of great things. The work goes on sweetly and sensibly in my soul. I have felt such a delightful sinking into Jehovah, for many weeks, as language fails to express : a losing myself in the depths of Deity. As trials of various kinds increase, so does the goodness of my God : I feel his loving eye continually upon me. He has kindled such a flame of divine love in my soul as I hope will never be extinguished, but burn brighter and brighter, till it mingle with the blaze of eternal day. I think the hour appointed for our meeting at a throne of grace has been blessed to both. May God increase us, and fill with all his communicable fulness.

I believe Mr. J. will leave the Wells about the end of May, having had a call to succeed Mr T. at B. : Mrs. P. also thinks of moving. Miss P. has taken offence. Mr. B., the ostensible manager, takes no active part, from weak spirits and nerves. All these things seem against me, but the work is the Lord's. Do help me by your prayers to see wherefore he contends, and that he would show me his will, and enable me to follow it.

Unless the light shines so clear as to make another journey decidedly plain, I cannot think of going there this summer.

Hoping to hear good accounts from you soon, and wishing you a swift progress in the heavenly road, I am dear Mrs. Johnson's fellow pilgrim and well wisher in Jesus, D. MAXWELL.

TO THE REV. ALEXANDER MATHER.

May 26, 1790.

REV. SIR,—I have perused your valuable manuscript with much satisfaction and profit. While I read it the Lord shone upon my heart, and upon your words, and witnessed to the truth of all you have advanced, in support of Christian perfection. I bless my God for inclining and enabling you so thoroughly to investigate this important doctrine, which has been so long

neglected. You have dug deep, cleared away much rubbish, and raised a beautiful superstructure upon a solid basis; and, by so doing, rendered an essential service to the church of Christ. The crude, undigested ideas that many well meaning people form of this important branch of the believer's privilege not only necessarily lead to mistakes in practice, but make it an object of contempt and derision. This will not, I trust, be the case in future, as you have happily rescued it from the malice of enemies and the mistakes of friends; and set it forth in its own native beauty. And thus viewed, what a lovely truth it is! How worthy of its divine original! How ornamental to humanity! May the almighty fiat go forth respecting it; then many shall not only see and admire, but also happily enjoy the blessing of *perfect love*. Your sharp eye, however, will perceive that a few corrections will be necessary, before the manuscript is sent to the press. You will forgive this freedom; strictures do not become a female pen.

I thank Mr. Mather for his addition to the letter I received from Dundee, which was viewed through the medium he wished; Mr. — may grieve, but cannot offend. I believe the Lord will lead me into *all his* will concerning me. Here I rest; I cannot walk by the light of another. But I forbear: Mr. Mather understands me thoroughly as to the point in hand.

I would now touch upon a more pleasing theme; the goodness of God to my own soul. But here I must still complain of the poverty of mortal language, which can convey but an imperfect idea of the deep things of God. I have much reason to be thankful that my fellowship is still with the Father and Son. I do experience the accomplishment of that precious promise, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." Though I can lay claim to a very small degree of purity, yet, in virtue of it, I clearly perceive the triune God: a sense of Deity rests upon my soul: I enjoy such sweet sinking into Jehovah as I can by no means express; indeed it beggars all description, and has almost every moment since I last wrote you at Wakefield. I then mentioned a most remarkable manifestation I had been favoured with, more particularly from God the Father, attended with that inexpressible nearness, or, speaking more properly, a losing of myself in the depths of Deity: and still it continues. Amazing goodness! This sweet sinking into God so humbles the soul, and, at the same time, so exalts and aggrandizes it, as is pleasing and profitable to experience. I am kept alive to my weakness and ignorance, but not discouraged; because, on every application to my God, I am raised above them, when any exertion is necessary on my part. On this account I refuse no work assigned me, however unequal to the task. And if at any time I make my way through what is difficult and perplexing, I clearly see to whom the glory is due, and feel much disposed to give it.

But I must have done ; time would fail to enumerate all the instances of the tender, gracious dealings of my God. To you I write more fully on this subject than almost to any other, because I think you clearly understand me. It is a simple narration of facts ; much might be added, but I forbear. My hands have been sensibly strengthened by your manuscript. Your views and mine correspond entirely with respect to perfect love. Wishing you a still fuller enjoyment of every gospel promise, I remain, Rev. sir,

Your humble servant and well wisher in Jesus,
D. MAXWELL.

TO MISS RITCHIE.

July 30, 1790.

It was kind in dear Miss Ritchie to write me, more especially as, I believe, I owed her a letter. Indeed I have very little time left me for the pleasing and profitable employment of corresponding with Christians. But as this is by the appointment of Him who overruleth all things for his own glory, and eventually for his people's good, I wish to offer it up as a sacrifice to him, whose I am, and whom in all things I wish to serve.

Language is too faint to express what he has done for my soul since I wrote last to Miss Ritchie. I feel lost in wonder, love, and praise ! More especially since January last, my soul has centred in God in a very peculiar manner. I have sunk into Jehovah as a drop into the ocean ; and by the constant exertion of omnipotent power *here* I abide ; though daily occupied by a multiplicity of business and public engagements. I prove continually that the magnetic virtue of divine love is superior to every other attraction, and sufficient to bear up both mind and body under the weight of constant and diversified employment. How good, how gracious, how powerful, is our God.

Yet, though he has of late enlarged my capacity of receiving, and sensibly increased my little stock, I am deeply conscious that what I *now* possess is but as a drop in the bucket compared to that immensity from whence it flows ; or even to what he is willing to bestow. I am sweetly invited to come up higher, and partake more largely : and it is a comfortable thought, if we continue simply "to follow on to know the Lord," his going forth shall be still before us as light, and his brightness as a lamp that burneth. On some occasions I am favoured with astonishing views of the fulness of God, and of his willingness to impart of it : this so fires my soul, so expands my heart, that I grasp infinity itself. But here I am greatly withstood by the combined powers of darkness, who unite to drive me back, and attempt to fill my mind with horror ; while the nearness of Deity—the majestic grandeur of Jehovah—the heaven of sacred awe, that fills the place, almost overpowers the human frame. But

He who knows whereof we are made, and how little we can bear of these glorious displays of divine power and love while in the body, or of the strong assaults of the Satanic legion, quickly interposes—arrests the powers of darkness—veils, in a measure, the heavenly glory, and pours the soul-composing medicine of redeeming love into the heart. I look forward to that day when all my ransomed powers shall be so formed as easily to bear the dazzling brightness of unveiled Deity. Hail, auspicious morn! Indeed it is very desirable to make the most of our present fleeting moments.

I seem to derive the greatest advantage from a *lively faith* in *constant exercise*. This secures what I already possess, and increases the little stock. In secret prayer and meditation I obtain enlarged views of the full salvation of God; and what is thus discovered faith goes out after, and according to its strength are its returns. I prize much the divine teachings: with eager attention I listen to the heavenly lessons, and pant to reduce them to practice. I daily feel the need of the precious blood of sprinkling, dwell continually under its influence, and most sensibly prove its sovereign efficacy. It is by *momentary faith in this alone* that I am *saved from sin*. Dear Miss Ritchie must be satisfied with a small abstract, as I have not time to enlarge. When she can conveniently write I shall always be pleased to hear from her; and when I can spare a few minutes, will, for my own advantage, make a return.

There is no remarkable revival among us here: particular souls are blessed. I frequently meet a few young women who are alive. I hope some have entered the promised land, and others are struggling in. A *full salvation* has this last year been more insisted on in public, which has answered valuable purposes. Assist us with your prayers that “a little one may become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation.”

D. MAXWELL.*

* In the month of August Lady Maxwell again visited a few of the chapels under her care in England. On her return she wrote as follows in her diary:—

“September 2. I set out for Carlisle, Wigton, and Workington, on Lady Glenochy’s business, on the 18th of August; and returned here (Coates) yesterday. In the course of these fourteen days the Lord has been eminently with me. He preserved man and beast, and gave me my heart’s desire respecting the business I went about. He also gave me numberless opportunities of attempting the temporal and spiritual good of others, with power to use them; and much, very much, fellowship with the Father and the Son. In general I enjoyed the witness of sanctification, and often a plenitude of the divine presence. Truly my God was good to me. He strengthened for unusual exertions in his cause; and when tempted and tried he succoured and comforted me: more especially at one time, when Deity so condescended to visit me as turned my heaviness to joy unspeakable, and put a song of praise in my mouth. I am unable to tell of all the kindness and tenderness my God hath showed me since I left home. O that I may be faithful and humble!”

TO THE REV. ALEXANDER MATHER.

September 11, 1790.

REV. SIR,—Your letter, returned from Edinburgh, found me at Carlisle; where I had gone upon business. I am sorry to see by it that you are still very poorly. Our God knows “what best for each will prove:” and we are warranted to believe that all his dispensations toward his people, whether joyous or grievous, are conducted upon this principle. I hope he will soon restore you to health, and continue your extensive sphere of usefulness to a late period. It is very desirable to fill up life with action, but it is possible to *overdo*; though I believe the case seldom occurs. Indeed I should not be surprised if it often did. When God is the object of supreme affection, who can *love* too much, or *do* too much? Divine love cannot be bounded by the frigid laws of cool reasoning, however just.

I hope the state of your health will admit of the free use of your pen, in the weeks of your retirement and relaxation, whereby you may essentially serve the best interests of your fellow creatures; and this will the more easily reconcile your active spirit to a narrow circle.

I must now give you a few words upon the chapter of *self*, as I know you will expect it, and also thoroughly understand me in so doing. I would preface it by saying, as Mr. Cole carried my *last*, he must have forgot ten to deliver it: but I would add, it was perhaps as well he did: as I suppose every minute of your time during conference was fully occupied. My God still condescends to show the sweetest complacency. Herein I discern the fulness of that *satisfaction* which the blood of Christ hath made for me. It is *full* reconciliation. O what praise is due to him! In the course of my last excursion my God made much of his goodness to pass before me; gave me my heart's desire respecting the business that carried me from home; and much, very much, delightful fellowship with heaven,—often a plenitude of the divine presence, and one very remarkable manifestation of the holy Trinity. A few days after, when tempted and tried, Jehovah came down in solemn grandeur; so surrounded me, so penetrated my inmost soul, with a sense of the presence of Deity, and so filled me with a heaven of silent love, as baffles all expression. This glorious interview, you may believe, soon scattered all my foes, and left me lost in wonder, love, and praise! and, perhaps, a little strengthened for a few exertions in the best of causes. I find it a matter of thankfulness that this continued intercourse with divinity does not make *humanity* a cross to me; and that, though my God keeps me united to *himself*, yet he lets me down, and enables me willingly to perform the necessary duties of life, and often affords as much enjoyment when so employed as when in secret with himself. Hitherto

(to his praise I would speak it) he has given me to see what things are necessary, what things are lawful, what things are expedient, and what are not. And I would venture to say he has given me a small measure of light into what is, and is not, consistent with that state of gospel liberty of which he has condescended to let me taste. It is but a taste; and what I chiefly want is a deeper entrance into the holiest. My way is plain—the door is open—a glorious field is before me. My God invites me forward; but I do not seem yet to have faith sufficient to receive all that is offered. Let me have your thoughts upon this, and your prayers; that every fresh manifestation of the love, power, and goodness of God, may fully answer the gracious end of sovereign love. The *peculiar* privilege of God's children has been more insisted on in public this last year than formerly here; of consequence *they increase* who seek it, both in numbers and grace. May our God raise many witnesses of it. That Mr. Mather may enjoy it, in all its heights and depths, in his own soul, and teach it successfully to others, is the prayer of his well wisher in the Lord Jesus,

D. MAXWELL.

TO MRS. JOHNSON.

October 13, 1790.

As you expressed a desire in your last to hear from me, I wish to gratify it, without expecting an answer, except the Lord gives you power and liberty to favour me with one. You pain me by the reason assigned for your long silence: "A sacred restraint laid upon you, not understanding for what those blessed manifestations were to prepare me: afraid to touch the tender soul, knowing my feelings must be exquisite." It led me to cry to the Lord that he would show me clearly and fully what he designed by his very gracious dealings with me, and also enable me to fall in with them. I dread the thought either of mistaking or thwarting his sacred intentions. Will you assist me here, and, when you can easily, let me know your thoughts upon the important business. As yet I see no very great ends answered. I am enabled to bear a more public and decided testimony for Christian perfection by my lips and pen. O that I may do it by my life! I seem, as it were, *set* for the defence and promoting of this important branch of doctrine and experience, and find that the Lord owns me in it, at least so far as it respects my own soul. But I would fain look for far greater things as to others. The prospect was brighter some months ago for the latter; the former, through the tender mercy of my God, increases. I am blessed frequently with fresh discoveries of the love and power of a triune Deity—with powerful renewals of former manifestations: and, as I freely receive, I endeavour freely to give; if, peradventure, a simple recital might be made useful to others,

more especially as it respects the work of sanctification, a doctrine very little known here. A few in the society do enjoy it; several are pressing after it, and the preachers profess themselves of the number; and do insist upon, and endeavour to explain the doctrine in public and private. But, as you justly observe, "The Lord himself must come down among us before great things are accomplished." "O that a little one may become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation." From day to day I am made to *taste* of that perfect love that casts out fear; and often experience a plenitude of the divine presence. But I most sensibly find it is only by momentary faith in the blood of Jesus that I am kept from sin: and that my soul is less or more vigorous as I live by faith. For ten months past my fellowship has been in a peculiar manner with the Father: for some days past I have been favoured with the most delightful communion with the Son. He hath shone with remarkable brightness upon my soul. Yesterday a *fear* respecting a future trial passed quickly through my mind: in that moment the sacred Three surrounded me, banished the tempter and the temptation, and penetrated my inmost soul with a solemn, sweet sense of the presence of Deity. How condescending to dust and ashes is our God, for Jesus' sake. But I long to sink into *all* the depths of humble love. Let us help each other on by earnest prayer. O that we may more than ever be made willing and active recipients of every purchased blessing.

My cares and troubles increased at Hope Chapel till of late the storm abated; but still matters go on poorly. Mr. J. refused the chapel, and I seem to see the Lord's call for another visit in the spring. May his will be done in that business. Mr. S., of Dublin, offers me his service as a stated pastor at Hope Chapel, and refers me to Mrs. Johnson, among others, for his character. Now, peace be with your spirit. May the sacred attraction increase till you are lost and swallowed up in the beatific vision, prays

Your fellow traveller,

D. MAXWELL.

CHAPTER XXVI.—1791.

Death of the Rev. John Wesley—Lady Maxwell again visits Bristol—Fresh difficulties at Hope Chapel—Change in the mode of conducting public worship—Correspondence continued.

AN event occurred soon after the commencement of this year, highly important in the annals of Methodism. On the 2d of March the Rev. John Wesley, after a life of almost unparalleled labours and usefulness, was called to his reward. It has been seen that this honoured servant of Jesus Christ was rendered highly useful to Lady Maxwell at the important period when

truth first began to dawn on her mind. By his conversation and letters he pointed her, as he had done thousands, to "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." He led her into fellowship with a people among whom she enjoyed what she ever deemed her highest privileges: and by a correspondence which had been maintained till within a short period of his death, he had afforded her advice and assistance on many critical occasions. Though twenty-seven years had elapsed since first they knew each other, time and circumstances had only tended to increase and confirm their religious union. In one of his last letters to her ladyship, he thus expressed his high esteem:—"I really love to write to you, as I love to think of you. And sometimes it may please Him who sends by whom he will send, to give you some assistance by me. And your letters have frequently been an encouragement and a comfort to me. Let them never, my dear friend, be intermitted, during the few days I have to stay below."* When the tidings of Mr. Wesley's departure reached her ladyship, "nature felt keenly" at the loss; yet she was enabled sweetly to bow to the sovereign will of God. Anxious that every proper respect should be paid to such distinguished worth, she had the following advertisement, drawn up by her own pen, inserted in the Edinburgh newspapers:—"On Wednesday last, at his house in London, died that great and good man, the Rev. John Wesley, at a very advanced period; after a life of the most unwearied diligence, and unexampled activity in the service of his God, and the general interests of mankind. His extensive labours were crowned with uncommon success in various parts of different and distant kingdoms. But, as might be expected, his very uncommon abilities, and extensive usefulness, laid him under that severe tax which all must pay who are so far raised above the common level of mankind. Now, that he is no longer the object of envy, it is hoped prejudice will give way to more candid and honourable sentiments, and thereby leave the public at liberty to do justice to one of the greatest characters that has appeared since the apostolic age." Two letters have been selected out of many, which will sufficiently show what were her ladyship's views and feelings on this solemn occasion.

Soon after this affecting bereavement, Lady Maxwell was again called to Bristol. The prosperity of the work of God, at Hope Chapel, was an object dear to her heart; but the prospect of doing good was overshadowed by many an intervening cloud. An amiable young minister, who had for some time officiated there, and who has since, by his printed discourses, delighted and instructed many a pious group around the family altar, had accepted a call to another congregation. Many difficulties presented themselves in securing a suitable successor;—and preju-

* Wesley's Works, vol. vii, p. 26.

dice against all dissenters, and dissenting modes of worship, with a strong predilection for our venerable establishment, generally prevailed at Clifton. Under these circumstances her ladyship's presence became necessary. She therefore left Edinburgh on the 26th of April; and visiting, as usual, her other chapels in her way, arrived at the Hot Wells on the 12th of the following month. She was at first greatly oppressed and discouraged on witnessing the state of affairs; and, for some time, remained uncertain of the path of duty. Her solicitude and fatigue greatly affected the state of her health. But, after fervently imploring direction from the great Head of the church, and consulting with those whom she deemed best qualified to afford her light on the subject, she determined to comply with the general wishes of the people, and, as far as she could with a clear conscience, "become all things to all men, that she might, by all means, save some." The change which was made, and the plan finally adopted, will be developed in the following letters.

On this part of her ladyship's conduct, individuals under the influence of discordant sentiments will of course judge differently. But it is presumed that all who impartially examine the motives by which she was actuated—the grand object which she invariably pursued—the calm deliberation with which she weighed every connecting circumstance—her long and continued prayer that she might *know* and *do* the will of God,—will readily acquit her of all intentional wrong, and give her credit for doing what she firmly believed was most likely to secure the benevolent designs of the foundress of the chapel. The candid and the pious will view it as a noble triumph gained over every party feeling and the strong bias of national prejudice, by a supreme desire to promote the glory of God and the salvation of immortal souls. And, perhaps, all will allow to her ladyship that "modes and forms are no farther useful than as they are calculated to promote these valuable purposes."* But she shall again speak for herself.

TO THE REV. ALEXANDER MATHER.

January 11, 1791.

The hints which Mr. Mather gave in his last, I proved very seasonable and useful, respecting the trials and temptations consequent upon bearing the burthens of Christians at a throne of grace. I have suffered a good deal from that quarter lately. An unusual spirit of prayer was poured upon me for many weeks. I was constrained to plead earnestly and frequently; more especially for the prosperity of the society in Edinburgh; that the

* On all points of an extrinsic or circumstantial nature, things superinduced upon Christianity, or which attach to it merely as the deductions of human opinion, the church of Christ may be internally divided without schism: may admit of diversity without disunion.—*Conder on Protestant Nonconformity*, b. i, sec. 11, p. 58.

Lord would raise up many witnesses of his power to save to the uttermost ; and was greatly encouraged herein, more particularly upon Wednesday, the 15th of last December. A most remarkable spirit of intercession rested upon me. I seemed to see Jehovah by faith, seated on a throne of grace. He condescended to give me a wonderful audience for myself, and all I brought with me in the arms of Christian love and faith. No man ever more literally presented his friend at court, to an earthly sovereign, than I was by faith permitted to present particular souls to the King of kings ; and to plead for the blessings of which I knew they stood in need, and were seeking after. A prayer-hearing God seemed most graciously to listen to all my petitions, which were chiefly confined to sanctification : nor could I doubt but they were registered, and would be answered. I obtained no particular promises, nor did I seem to require any farther confirmation in the important business. A crowd of Christian friends seemed to pour in upon my mind, and plead hard to be remembered. This remarkable and solemn interview continued for hours ; and had time, strength, &c., permitted me to improve the precious opportunity to the uttermost, it would, perhaps, have been still better for myself and others. With truth I can say I gave over asking, before my God gave over listening to my requests. It was a memorable season indeed. But what is particular, the moment I ceased pleading, I entered into a sea of temptation, and was so buffeted of Satan, for weeks after, as no language can express. The fiery darts of the enraged adversary so pierced my soul as to affect my body. My heart was wrung with keen distress. Every inch of ground was disputed with me, and every grain of my grace was tried to the uttermost. Even the witness for sanctification was attacked. *This* I would not yield, though the combined powers of darkness seemed to unite to wrest it from me. *He* that dwells on high only knows what I suffered ; and he was gracious, and kindly condescended to explain why it was thus with me. He sweetly whispered his pardoning and purifying love to my soul. He did, indeed, wonderfully uphold me by the right hand of his power ; yet, for a time, only so far as to strengthen and endure the appointed time of trial. Marylike, I pondered all this in my own breast, not thinking it prudent to divulge it to any here. But *now* the tempest is abated ; the waters are assuaged ; the enemy is rebuked ; and my mind is filled with heavenly serenity and divine composure. I dwell in love and in God ; and enjoy a glorious liberty, through believing. I sweetly rest in Jesus, and enjoy the Spirit's seal for the destruction of the bitter root : and all these trying scenes, that so tend to disturb the tenor of placid life, are easily endured, reaching only the surface of the soul. Mr. Mather having strengthened me by the useful information conveyed in his last, I would now wish him to help me to improve to the

uttermost, from these trying conflicts, which are now happily over.

I hope the Lord will, more than ever, arise and maintain his cause in our northern clime ; more especially as it respects that important branch of Christian doctrine and experience, *perfect love*.

This has been written in a great hurry, with many interruptions, as I have a variety of secular affairs to attend to this day, which must cover all defects. The situation of Hope Chapel will, I believe, oblige me to go to Bristol in April. It is now almost the only piece of important business that remains unsettled, of all that work left me to finish by my friend, now in glory ; and which was so clearly put into my hands by the great Disposer of all events. Upon a retrospect of the whole business, (from first to last enveloped in confusion and perplexity,) truly I have great cause to say, "What hath God wrought?" When to this I add what he hath done for my soul in the course of these four years, in which I have been so fully occupied, I am "lost in wonder, love, and praise." This last year far exceeds any former experience, for depth of communion with Deity ; for amazing displays of the love and power of Jehovah ; for exertions in his cause, and for his people : "It is mystery all!" Strongly glows the flame of grateful love in my heart. May it burn stronger and stronger, till it mingles with the blaze of eternal day. Wishing you all the fulness of gospel promises, I remain, Rev. sir,

Your humble servant,

D. MAXWELL.

TO MRS. JOHNSON, ON THE DEATH OF REV. JOHN WESLEY.

March 14, 1791.

I rejoice to see my good friend's hand once more ; and to hear that the Lord is still dealing so tenderly and graciously with her. At present I am so situated, I can only catch a moment to write a few lines. And so that great and good man is gone ! A dispensation, big with importance to thousands. I felt keenly, though perfectly satisfied. A year or two more would have reduced him to a state of childhood : but now he has made an honourable retreat, in the possession of all his mental powers ; after a long life of unwearied diligence, and unexampled activity in the service of his God, and the general interests of mankind, and with most uncommon success attending his extensive labours. May the Lord still be the Head of the large body of Christians he has left behind. O that one soul may animate the whole.

It is impossible for me to tell you how good my God has been to me on this mournful occasion. A spring tide of pure, perfect love has filled my soul. I have felt such a sinking into Jehovah,

so lost in his immensity, as I cannot express : no *rapturous joy*, but a full sea of holy, humble love. My heart was melted into deep gratitude ; its tenderest feelings were called forth ; and every degree of that anxiety about future events which brings weakness into the soul, was entirely excluded. What can I render unto the Lord for this exuberance of goodness, so well suited to my present feelings, when mourning the loss of a valuable friend and most useful minister of Christ. Truly I am made to rise above the grave of my departed friend : I trace him worshipping before the throne, and by faith hold fellowship with his spirit. Blessed Jesus, how sweet art thou to my soul ; the sacred source of all my comforts !

But I want to know my Jesus better. O help me forward. I do desire to draw many with me, and am helped to speak plainly and to bear a decided testimony for God. We are gaining ground here, both in numbers and grace. Two of the preachers possess, and openly declare the perfect love of God. The third has made great advances ; but has not yet attained. Plead for him. In haste, farewell. May you sink deeper into Jesus, and rise still higher, and continue to assist

Your fellow pilgrim,

D. MAXWELL.

TO MISS RITCHIE, ON THE SAME SUBJECT.

March 19, 1791.

I am much indebted to dear Miss Ritchie for her very obliging attention, at a time when she must have been much occupied, and had all her tenderest feelings tried to the uttermost. Your narrative gave much satisfaction to my mind, though nature felt keenly. I cannot sufficiently adore the goodness of my God ; who, from the moment the doleful tidings reached my ears, so encircled me in the divine arms, so poured his love into my aching heart, as at once to leave it at liberty to pay the tribute so justly due to the memory of the dear departed saint ; and, also, to rest with the fullest acquiescence in the divine will. Surely all things are possible to them that believe. You have been highly privileged these last two winters in being so much with that eminent servant of God ; whose life was such a living comment upon the pure doctrines he taught ; and, at last, how greatly honoured, in witnessing the closing scene. By faith, I can view him worshipping before Jehovah's throne ; and seem to hold fellowship with his happy spirit. I do not know that I ever heard of a life so crowded with action ; so unweariedly filled up *with* and *for* God—not one vacant moment in the twenty-four hours. Many sons have done well ; but, if I do not view him through a too flattering medium, he excels them all. The Lord enable us, in our small measure, to be faithful ; to live more to *him*, by whom it is we live at all.

Lately my God seems, more than ever, to be fixing me with all his weight of love. He has wonderfully chained up, for a time, the powers of darkness; so that I seem, as it were, to lay becalmed in the midst of a boundless *pacific* ocean of pure love. I prove divine love a noble, generous principle; it will not be kept down; it rises above all things, both painful and pleasant. It is an adequate support under every pressure, and a happy preservative against ensnaring temptations. O love divine, how sweet, how strong thou art. But I am called to higher things, and feebly press on to all the heights and depths of perfect love. From what I feel, I must conclude the heaven of heavens is love.

I pray that dear Miss Ritchie may feel such a spring tide of this pure element, filling the whole capacity of her soul, on this mournful occasion, as shall effectually dry every tear—except those that delight; and suppress every sigh—except those that waft to heaven.

We gain ground here, both in numbers and in grace: and, since the melancholy dispensation took place, an uncommon thirst after the word has sensibly increased. O that multitudes may so hear as to believe, and obtain the final salvation of their souls. So prays, dear Miss Ritchie's affectionate fellow traveller, and friend in Jesus,

D. MAXWELL.

TO THE REV. ALEXANDER MATHER.

Bristol, June 24, 1791.

REV. SIR,—Your Christian letter came in course, but I have been prevented answering by various causes. I have had a severe cold, and also suffered keenly on account of the situation of Hope Chapel. From strong desires for its prosperity, and uncertainty of the path of duty, I had at first opened it upon the dissenting plan; but, from the beginning, was told it never would succeed, without admitting the church service. Not finding liberty to take this step, I continued to carry it on as I had begun; believing that the Lord would lead me into his will, as I had no desire respecting it but *this*. After three years' trial, I am now convinced that the present plan does not reach the generous design of the institution; namely, extensive usefulness, independent of parties, or modes, or forms of worship. These latter, I see, are no farther useful than as they are calculated to promote valuable purposes. The eligibility of a change I now clearly perceive; and what that change should be, the uniform voice of the public leaves me without a doubt. Yet, without the word of command from the great Head of the church, I durst not proceed. I cried mightily unto the Lord, for light to discover, and power and inclination to do *his will* in this business, and this in great condescension he has given. The way is plain, and I

have taken my measures accordingly; without regarding the smiles or frowns of any. I am to adopt the church service, without putting the chapel under episcopal jurisdiction; to fix a church minister in it, truly alive to God; to have the service only on the Lord's day; not to allow admission to the Lord's table without a ticket; to keep the pulpit open for worthy characters of different denominations; together with some other regulations which may be profitable. This design, having transpired, has given universal satisfaction; and now high and low flock to hear. Most of the inhabitants of Clifton are Episcopalians, and two-thirds of the vast multitude that annually resort from all quarters, for the benefit of the waters, are of the same persuasion; all tenacious of their church forms, and would by no means listen to a dissenter.

This revolution, which I trust is of God, has greatly increased my labours, both of head and hands; but the Lord hath upheld me hitherto; and though thus continually occupied, I have nevertheless had more intercourse with the Methodists here than ever formerly. I have frequented the Room more, and heard with much satisfaction and profit, especially from Mr. H. Moore. My favourite meetings with the people have indeed been precious seasons; much owned of God. In them I endeavoured to bear my testimony to the work of sanctification; both as a doctrine, and as experienced in my own soul. I found not a few just ready to lay hold of the blessing. The Lord gave strength for it, and I found much liberty to speak upon the *only way* of obtaining this farther salvation, *simple faith*. And now, after all my feeble attempts, in different ways, to promote the glory of my God and his kingdom among men, I begin to look homeward, being almost worn out; and have a desire, if it be the Lord's will, to meet with Mr. Mather in my way. I mean to leave here on Thursday, the 30th, and would be glad to hear from you before then. Inform me if I should find you at Wakefield about the 12th of July. If all goes well I think I may reach there by that time, or at least by the 15th.

In great haste, I must conclude this inaccurate epistle. Many interruptions will prove an apology. Wishing Jesus may so dwell in you as to be the constant solace, the momentary food of your soul, and daily renew your commission to preach with power and success the *whole* gospel, I remain, Rev. sir,

Your humble servant in Jesus,

D. MAXWELL.

TO MRS. JOHNSON.

August 2, 1791.

By the good hand of my God upon me I reached home on Saturday, the 30th, mercifully preserved from danger, though not from fear. To keep clear of the riots at Birmingham, I was

obliged to change my road. It was mostly a time of temptation and trial, but my God was at hand to support and deliver; and afforded many opportunities of acting for him, and has also given me cause to praise him since I came home. I long to hear of my Bristol friends; they have been much upon my mind, and I have been led to hope that the Lord was at work among them. I trust Mrs. G. stands fast in the faith. Tell her it will give me much satisfaction to know this from herself. Worthy Mrs. Valton can, I hope, now firmly believe that the bitter root is destroyed. I felt much liberty to speak before her amiable husband: may he wax stronger and stronger. Has Mrs. L. yet entered into the promised land? I feel much interested in all of these I met with. I never saw more clearly than when at Bristol the value of *simple faith*. O this does so help me in every situation as words cannot express. It so sensibly draws virtue from the Saviour as diffuses present healing through my soul, and counteracts the malicious designs of the subtle adversary. Had I a voice that could reach to the ends of the Christian world, I would say to every seeking penitent, only *believe* and justification is yours; only *believe*, and sanctification is yours. It is this of which my friends at Bristol stand so much in need. Their souls are ripe for the *full* salvation of God. Could I impart this invaluable blessing, how willingly would I do it. May *He* who is both able and willing, bestow it upon each of them for his name's sake who died to purchase it. My soul feels on stretch for them. Let us plead mightily with God on their behalf.

I met with a precious old female disciple at Penrith; so strong in the faith; so rooted and grounded in it; so divinely clear in her experience with respect to sanctification, as refreshed my soul greatly. She has been in this blessed state for many years. I trust your soul sinks deeper, and rises higher, into all the life of God. My soul longs for greater nearness to my God. I feel a sweet sinking into him, but this cannot suffice.

Having much business on hand from my long absence, I must conclude. Shall be glad to hear soon from you, with good accounts of the precious souls with you. Dear Mrs. Johnson's friend in Jesus,

D. MAXWELL.

TO THE REV. C. ATMORE, ALNWICK.

December 28, 1791.

Your letter, Rev. sir, I received in course. I esteem it a privilege, on every proper occasion, to show my good will and desire to promote the cause of God. Did my abilities keep pace with my inclinations, my attempts in that way would be more frequent and large. Lately, my engagements of that kind have been more numerous than ever; and I can truly say my heart

has been proportionably enlarged. But, in order to *help all*, I have been constrained to give less *to each* than I otherwise should have done : this will, I hope, preclude the propriety of an apology for the enclosed.

I am glad to hear that the Lord owns the exertions which you are making, both in the spiritual and temporal concerns of his cause ; and that he favours you with frequent visits from on high. But is he not willing to do greater things for you ? O yes ! Devise liberal things of God, and by these you shall stand and testify, not only that Jesus has power on earth to forgive sin, but also to cleanse from all unrighteousness. Then commences the eternal sunshine of the spotless mind :—

“Desires composed, affections ever even,
Tears that delight, and sighs that waft to heaven.”

Through the tender mercy of my God, I am enabled still to walk in the liberty of the gospel—to endure as seeing Him who is invisible. But, though I have begun to scale the mount of holiest love, I am far from the summit of my wishes. There are heights and depths of the pure love of Jehovah of which I am kept in continual pursuit, but not so as thereby to prevent the sweet enjoyment of what is already bestowed.

We have some increase here. Wishing that every revolving season may find you increasing in usefulness and conformity to the divine image, and with my own and Christian friends' best wishes to Mr. and Mrs. Atmore, I am, Rev. sir,

Your faithful, humble servant in the Lord,

D. MAXWELL.

CHAPTER XXVII.—1792.

Diary and correspondence continued.

FROM this period the letters of Lady Maxwell which have been preserved, become less numerous. We shall, therefore, in tracing the subsequent stages of her experience, have recourse principally to her diary : reserving, however, the liberty of inserting in chronological order, at the end of each year, such extracts from her letters as may either tend farther to elucidate the exercises of her mind, or be calculated to convey instruction to others.

January 7. Agreeably to my earnest desire I have, through the tender mercy and great indulgence of a God of love, seen greater things indeed. I had frequently prayed that I might terminate the last, and begin this new year, under the peculiar

smile of Heaven ; and of a truth, my expectations were greatly exceeded. Early on Sunday morning, the first day of this year, I had a most wonderful display of the love and power of a triune God. This continued for many hours in its full strength, and, in a degree, for several days—it was a most memorable season—I proved the “overwhelming power of saving grace.” I would here attempt to give the great outlines ; for no human pen can describe all I felt and saw. Early on Sunday morning, in secret prayer, God the Father and Son drew very nigh. A sense of the divine presence so penetrated my inmost soul as to arrest the whole powers of my mind, in deep and solemn attention. A spirit of supplication was then poured upon me for myself and others ; while I felt so surrounded with Deity, so let into Jehovah, as no words can express. It seemed as if I might ask what I would, both for myself and others, with confidence that it should be done for me. This glorious and solemn interview continued till half past ten. I then went to chapel, when it was greatly increased. The eternal world felt very nigh ; I seemed by faith come to Mount Sion, the heavenly Jerusalem. My spirit felt mingling with its blessed inhabitants, while the SACRED THREE felt, as it were, encamping around me. It was glory all—past expression ! I seemed to sink deeper into the boundless ocean of pure love. This did not appear to me a solitary blessing, but in a measure diffused through the whole congregation assembled for the purpose of showing forth the dying love of Jesus. I have learned that many were peculiarly blessed at the time. O my God, what can I say to these things ? It is mercy, pure unbounded mercy. Enable me to improve these precious seasons to the uttermost. O Jesus, keep the loving eye of my faith steadily upon thyself ; cover my defenceless head with the shadow of thy wing ; then shall I be safe.

— 20. Since the 13th I have experienced the goodness of the Lord : the languor then complained of has been in a measure removed. On the morning of the 16th, my God strongly impressed upon my heart the following words : “The Lord is with me as a mighty, terrible one ; therefore my persecutors shall stumble, and they shall not prevail : they shall be greatly ashamed ; for they shall not prosper ; their everlasting confusion shall never be forgotten. But, O Lord of hosts, that triest the righteous, and seest the reins and the heart, let me see thy vengeance on them ; for unto thee have I opened my cause. Sing unto the Lord, praise ye the Lord ; for he hath delivered the soul of the poor from the hand of evil doers,” Jer. xx, 11–13. Immediately after, the following passage seemed to pierce my inmost soul : “Watch ye, therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man,” Luke xxi, 36. It is not easy to say what my feelings were on this occa-

sion ; the words solemnized my mind, and increased my desire and power to pray and watch. They have frequently recurred to my remembrance since, awakening in me a godly jealousy lest I should offend. O how good is the Lord to his poor creature, who, in the midst of many weaknesses, desires to love him with all her heart. With what wisdom and tenderness was the word of admonition administered ! first strengthening and comforting my soul, by telling me he was with me ; and then warning me of danger, by pointing me to the best preservatives against it. Bless the Lord, O my soul.

May 20. Since my last date, I have gone through a hot furnace of bodily and mental distress. At times my God and Saviour drew nigh, and often disappointed my fears ; but my disorder deeply affecting my nerves and spirits, I suffered keenly. I now learned the propriety and necessity of those scriptures which were applied to my mind before the commencement of this great affliction. Alas ! fear chilled my soul, and in a measure sunk me from God : at least from that degree of sweet communion with the Father and Son with which I had been favoured for four or five years. Words can faintly express what I have suffered. O that all may be sanctified to the utmost, and be succeeded by love so *matured* as to exclude all *doubt* and *fear*. In many things, during my illness, I saw the hand of God, and had cause to bless him for his tender dealings : but still the powers of darkness were permitted to harass me greatly ; and I did not, as I ought, glorify my God in the midst of the fires. One lesson my God has been teaching me all along—the virtue, the necessity of simple faith ; that by *faith*, and not *joy*, I must live. He has, in a measure, often enabled me so strongly to act faith on Jesus for sanctification, even *in the absence of comfort*, as diffused a heaven of sweetness through my soul, and brought with it the powerful witness for purity. The Lord has also been teaching me to die to all self-complacency. He hath showed me much of my weakness, nothingness, poverty, and emptiness ; and, at the same time, how simple faith brings divine life into the soul. Within these few days, he has begun to repeat former manifestations of love, but they are generally succeeded by temptation. Though restored in a measure, it is as yet a state of spiritual weakness, but I fervently desire an increase of every grace.

June 22. During the last fortnight, I have been travelling for the benefit of my health, and have cause to say the end has been in some measure answered. Many opportunities have offered for the spiritual and temporal benefit of others : O that an effectual blessing may follow these efforts. The Lord graciously interposed in times of danger on the road. In mercy he brought me home on the 20th, and enabled me to testify of his goodness to my soul when with his children. His dealings with me for some time

past have been widely different from former times ! he seems to call me now especially to live by faith, and to listen to the various teachings of his Spirit. O that I may profit by all, and be enabled to glorify my God under every varied dispensation.

August 24. I have been again visited with bodily affliction, but my God dealt tenderly with me while it continued, and has in mercy removed it. I would observe, with gratitude, that while it remained the tide of spiritual temptations ran in a low channel. I had more comfort, more liberty at a throne of grace, and felt powerfully the witness for sanctification. The Lord teaches me that it is by *simple faith alone* that I can either obtain, retain, or increase, with regard to any gospel blessing ; and this mode of proceeding he condescends to own. I see it is owing to the mighty power of God, that I have been enabled to stand, in any measure, in the midst of floods of temptations which have recently prevailed. But O, I want to see greater things—to get faster on—to obtain more powerful renewals of former blessings. Hasten, Lord, the happy time.

October 26. I have lately known both the sweets of deep communion with the Father and Son, and also the depths of temptation : may both answer valuable purposes. On Monday last, in the evening, when in secret prayer, I was most unexpectedly favoured with a richer manifestation of the love of God than for many months before. The Father and Son broke in upon my soul with sweet surprise, which filled me with speechless awe. A deep sense of Deity surrounded and pierced my inmost soul. I could hardly credit my own feelings, or converse with mortals all that evening. This happy visitation continued for several days ; but lest I should be exalted above measure, a messenger of Satan was permitted to buffet me for a short season. This I felt exceedingly painful, and it gradually lessened my joys. The wormwood and gall of severe temptations are very bitter, after such heights of spiritual enjoyments : but I believe they are very common. The Lord make me faithful in every situation. My prayer was for much of that conquering faith which pain, and fear, and death defies ; for the spirit of power, that I might stand unmoved ; sink deeper into self-knowledge, and rise higher in divine wisdom and love.

December 7. How shall I record the loving kindness of my gracious God ! How sufficiently praise him ! On Monday evening, while hearing a discourse from, "Grow in grace," it was inwardly suggested, and surely from on high, "You should lift up your heart in prayer to God for his presence and blessing upon his people." Being enabled immediately to comply with the heavenly exhortation, through abounding mercy, I quickly caught the answering of returning grace. In a moment, God the Father, and Son, drew very nigh, and the place seemed filled with the divine presence, and with it my inmost soul felt deeply

penetrated. The heavenly attraction was strong, and the intercourse open : the love of God flowed in copious streams into my breast, and I trust the blessing was general. Since then I have continually tasted celestial sweetness, and have rejoiced as a daughter of Zion, because of an indwelling God. Yet, though faith in some measure feels lost in fruition, the *direct witness* for sanctification is not so distinct. My enjoyment consists chiefly of delightful fellowship with the Father and the Son ; and a continual sense of their presence, without, almost, a thought either of justification or sanctification. I trust a flame is kindled in my breast that shall never be extinguished. I have had, as is generally the case, when so highly favoured, furious attacks from the adversary of souls : these have affected deeply, but not robbed me of my heavenly guests. I asked a token for good before the end of the year ; and O, how graciously has God granted my request !

TO THE REV. ALEXANDER MATHER.

January 24, 1792.

I long to know what has become of my valuable correspondent, who has been now silent for many months. Perhaps the cause of this originates in myself : I believe I stand indebted to him for one letter. But as he knows that necessary attention to the work committed to me sets a seal upon a very large portion of my time, might he not sometimes give me two for one ? A few minutes of his valuable time, spent in accelerating the motion of a soul toward its centre, that has many things to retard its progress, would not, it is hoped, be a fruitless service to either.

I hope that "I deeper sink, and higher rise." I have never known so much of the nature of *simple faith*, or its unspeakable value, as since I tasted of the pure love of God. Plying this oar, I mean the *direct act of faith*, in stripping times, how is my soul upheld in the midst of temptations : at one time so subtle it requires superior light to discover the cloven foot ; at another, so furious I am obliged to suspend, as far as possible, the power of thought, in order to *reject* the *injections* of the adversary. Who can speak the value of simple faith ? Without it, how soon should I become weak as others. Surely my God does all things well and wisely : for if, with the mariner, I am permitted to go down sometimes into the deeps, it is only to be brought up again to see the wonderful works of the Lord. Can any have greater cause to praise him ? I mean not to insinuate that I have more grace than others ; but that my situation, from particular circumstances, requires much divine teaching, much comfort, much tenderness, superior attention, much direction ; and all this a God of love vouchsafes me, and in a way that

keeps me dependent upon *himself*, deeply sensible to whom I am indebted.

I am daily aiming at all the *perfection* of nature and grace that a probationary state of comparative *imperfection* will admit; but have the daily mortification to find I am far *short*, though not *wide* of the mark. Do you approve of this distinction? I mean (lest you should mistake me) not out of the right road.

I shall be glad to hear that you are making rapid progress heavenward; and also favoured with much success in your ministerial labours: and I am, Rev. sir,

Your faithful, humble servant in Jesus, D. MAXWELL.

TO MISS RITCHIE.

January 24, 1792.

When I received dear Miss Ritchie's kind letter, I was at the Hot Wells, Bristol, in a very poor state of health: partly owing to great and continual exertions both of body and mind. I felt a little of our dear Lord's sufferings when he said, "The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up." Such was the weakness of my animal frame at that time, that even the pleasing and very profitable seasons I enjoyed frequently, with Christians in Bristol, were too much for me. They were, indeed, precious opportunities. The Lord was with us of a truth. I hope ever to retain a grateful sense of his goodness at that time, both to myself and others. I have not yet regained my usual health; but, blessed be a God of love, the scale of blessings greatly preponderates in my soul. I am still permitted to walk in the liberty of the gospel; to enjoy delightful fellowship with the Father and the Son: a holy familiarity with Jehovah; at times so near, so solemn, and faith so realizing the sacred presence, that mortal language would in vain attempt to express what is seen, what is felt: and, in short, what passes between the Majesty of heaven and dust and ashes, upon these very solemn and very important occasions. Suffice it to say, it is glory all, and all divine. As far as I understand the mind of the Lord, these sacred interviews are granted for the spiritual benefit of others, as well as myself. There is generally a remarkable spirit of prayer and supplication poured upon me for the prosperity of the Lord's people; and I am so permitted to plead for them, so let into Jehovah, so made to see by faith *Him* that is invisible, as I can nowise express. Blessed be the Lord for a capacity to enjoy it! At other times, my intercourse is, in a peculiar manner, with God the Son: *then* the grandeur of majesty is absorbed in pure love. I sink down into a boundless ocean of perfect love. O that I may improve to the uttermost these great privileges.

My situation, from various causes, requires much of the presence of God—much divine teaching, support, and comfort; and,

in tender mercy, he bestows it. But you must not conclude that I have a perpetual sunshine. No! I have *sifting times*, when every grain of grace is tried: diversified temptations prevail, and divine comforts run in a low channel. These are chasms which the Lord shows me I must endeavour to fill up with *faith* and *prayer*. He sensibly strengthens me to endure; and thus kept, I soon emerge, I humbly hope, with some advantage: with fresh proofs of the Lord's goodness; with deeper convictions of my own weakness; and with clearer views of the suitability of Jesus in all his mediatorial characters. How good, how tender, is our God! Surely, as one whom his mother comforteth, so doth he deal with us. And it is no small mercy that we are not permitted to rest in present attainments. Perhaps this is one end that is answered by these changes we sometimes experience for the worse, according to our own apprehension; though I believe it is only an alteration in point of *enjoyment*, not of *possession*: for I have found a degree of danger, of sinking down too much into the ecstatic sweets of present enjoyment, when my soul was in its zenith of fellowship with the triune God. It would be very desirable to feel the soul every moment ascending with an even flame; but I am doubtful whether the animal frame, in its present state, can admit of this.

Surely, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be:" it is enough to know that, when Christ shall "appear, we shall be like him." Hail, auspicious morn! Till then, let us press on, and, with unabating vigour, nobly struggle through every difficulty. "And yet a little while, and He that shall come, will come."

I enter into dear Miss Ritchie's tender and acute feelings, when taking a retrospect of the great loss she has sustained, by the departure of a justly dear and invaluable friend—perhaps, the most costly sacrifice she ever offered up to *Him* who *claims* and possesses all her heart. I have been uncommonly carried above almost every painful thought and feeling, since Mr. Wesley left our world, by being allowed one invariable and delightful view of him, as worshipping before the throne. This keeps me perfectly alive to the full value of his character; softens and sweetly melts my heart; and will, I trust, accelerate my motion heavenward. His death, I believe, has been made a blessing to many, by him whose prerogative it is to extract good from seeming evil.

As I cannot always command my time, part of this was written some days ago. Since then I have had a most precious view of a triune Deity, which still remains with me, more clear than formerly. What an immense treasure is *here* opened to the Christian by simple faith. In diversified distress, how soothing in our best times: what a splendid thought, to be surrounded with the sacred Trinity! "It is mystery all!" The line of

reason is too short to fathom the depth of his love : our understanding too limited to conceive properly of its dignity.

But my paper admonishes me that I must have done. Do you follow out the glorious theme, and enlarge upon it in your next ; which I hope to be able to answer sooner than I have done your last.

D. MAXWELL.

CHAPTER XXVIII.—1793.

State of the nation at this period—Spread of infidelity—War proclaimed with France—Meetings for prayer among Christians—Diary and correspondence continued.

BEFORE we proceed to farther extracts from her ladyship's writings, it may be proper briefly to advert to the state of the nation at this period, in order to illustrate many of her subsequent allusions. This, indeed, will tend to show, in awful contrast, the influence of infidel and irreligious principles, when compared with the genuine tendency of the gospel of Christ, as displayed in these volumes. To those conversant with the history of Europe, it will be readily remembered that the most fearful convulsions were, at this time, threatening to shake the very basis of all civil, political, and ecclesiastical establishments. The horrid principles maintained by the atheistical and infidel philosophers of France had already spread anarchy, devastation, and misery throughout every rank and order of her vast population. By the levelling influence of these degraded and degrading principles, all their religious houses had been suppressed—the property of the clergy confiscated—the clergy themselves deprived of all their judiciary functions—and the very plate of their churches converted into currency. Having thrown down the altar, they proceeded, with the most infatuated violence, to farther outrage ; and, under the specious pretence of liberty and equality, abolished all titular distinction and feudal rights ;* and declared the kingly authority to be extinct. Having farther endeavoured to eradicate from their minds all sense of moral responsibility and all apprehensions of a coming eternity—without law, and consequently without control, they indulged, without remorse, the most savage and brutal passions ; and stood forth before the astonished gaze of the world, a nation of lawless banditti. Beside a number of dreadful massacres at Paris, and elsewhere, in the course of the preceding year, the destructive guillotine was invented ; and France was now covered with

* On the 25th of August, 1792, the archives of the order of St. Esprit, and the titles of nobility, enrolled in the convent of the Great Augustines at Paris, with all the registered proofs of nobility, amounting to nearly 600 huge folios, were publicly burned in the *Place Vendome*.

scaffolds, on which an immense quantity of blood was shed. To this blind and infuriated rage, during the present year, Louis XVI. first, and afterward Marie Antoinette, of Austria, his bereaved widow, fell a sacrifice. And, as if determined to carry their blasphemy to the most awful degree of daring, and, if possible, dethrone Jehovah himself, on the seventh of the ensuing December, the public exercise of the national religion was forbidden, and the worship of reason, liberty, and other imaginary deities, established in its stead.*

Happy would it have been for Britain had the operation of these detestable principles been confined to the other side of the channel. But the infernal leaven which had, more or less, diffused itself through every nation of Europe, was, at this period, banefully tainting the minds and morals of multitudes in our own happy country. The infamous Paine, and his coadjutors, zealous in the service of infidelity, had given circulation to an astonishing number of volumes and pamphlets; and addressing themselves, in artful language, to the passions and prejudices of

* "The only instance in which infidels of any description have possessed the supreme power and government of a country, and have attempted to dispose of human happiness according to their own doctrines and wishes, is that of *France*, since the beginning of the revolution. If we consider this government as established over a nation educated for ages to the belief and obedience of many doctrines of Christianity, and retaining, as to a great majority of the people, the habits formed by that education, the state of that nation will evince, beyond a question, that all which I have said [on the dreadful tendency of infidelity] is true without exaggeration. *France*, during this period, has been a theatre of crimes, which, after all preceding perpetrations, have excited in the mind of every spectator, amazement and horror. The miseries suffered by that single nation have changed all the histories of the preceding sufferings of mankind into idle tales, and have been enhanced and multiplied, without a precedent, without number, and without name. The kingdom appeared to be changed into one great prison; the inhabitants converted into *felons*, and the common doom of man commuted for the violence of the sword and the bayonet, the sucking boat and the guillotine. To contemplative men it seemed for a season as if the knell of the whole nation was tolled, and the world summoned to its funeral. Within the short time of ten years, not less than *three millions* of human beings are supposed to have perished in that single country, by the influence of atheism." Were such principles universally prevalent, '*appetite* would change every man into a *swine*, and *passion* into a *tiger*. Right would neither be acknowledged, nor be felt, nor exist. Whatever was coveted would be sought and obtained, if it could be done with safety. Whatever was hated would, so far as safety would permit, be hunted and destroyed. To deceive, to fraud, to betray, to maim, to torture, and to butcher, would be the common employment, and the common sport. The dearest and most venerable relations would be violated by incestuous pollution; and children, such of them I mean as were not cast under a hedge, thrown into the sea, or dashed against the stones, would grow up without a home, without a parent, without a friend. The world would become one vast den; one immeasurable sty; and the swine and the wolf would be degraded, by a comparison with its inhabitants.' May God preserve Britain from the influence of such infernal principles."—*Vide Dwight's Theology Explained*, &c., vol. i, p. 51.

the lower orders in society, too well succeeded in their diabolical purposes. Symptoms of insubordination were manifested in different parts of the country,—apprehensions of insurrection created alarm,—and the people of Britain, reflecting on the horrid outrages which had recently occurred on the continent, felt as if under the tremour of a general panic.

In addition to these affecting particulars, at the commencement of this year war was proclaimed between England and France, and the nation was involved in all the calamities of a long and fearfully bloody contest. Great commercial distress became almost universal; and a full tide of bankruptcy setting in, swept away the independence and comfort of many a happy family. For several of the following years, our island was menaced by its foreign enemies; formidable preparations were made for invading its shores; and the public mind was thus long kept in a fearfully perturbed and agitated state.

Lady Maxwell, in common with other pious persons, recognized in all this the righteous government of God. She viewed these calamities as indications of his just displeasure. She lamented the aboundings of infidelity and ungodliness, and, contrasting these with the religious privileges which England enjoyed, she could not but fear the most alarming consequences. Under these apprehensions, she believed that the salvation of our guilty land depended solely on the mercy and seasonable interposition of a gracious God; and that it was the duty of Christians to seek for this mercy, by a general humiliation, and by fervent prayer. She therefore endeavoured to excite the pious, of different denominations in Edinburgh, to meet frequently together, in their respective places of worship, for these express purposes; that, by prevailing intercession, every impending judgment might be averted. In this labour of true Christian patriotism, she was successful, and meetings for prayer were established in different places throughout the city. She also endeavoured to stimulate her correspondents, in distant parts, to engage in the same important duty; and about this time a spirit of solemn intercession was diffused throughout the country. To the man who discards the Scriptures, and to the mere nominal professor, who considers not the blessings annexed to faithful prayer, all this may appear as useless and unavailing; but the man who believes his Bible, and lives in the habit of prayer, will, at all times, under similar circumstances, place more dependence on the prayers of the faithful, than in the skill of our commanders—the number and valour of our armies—the vastness of our resources—or even in the wooden walls of Great Britain. “The battle is not to the strong.” “Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might;—let not the rich man glory in his riches. But let him that glorieth, glory in this, that he understandeth

and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exercise loving kindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth." "Put not your trust in princes, for vain is the help of man." After these remarks we shall again recur to the diary.

March 15. I have lately been favoured with repeated opportunities of showing forth the dying love of Jesus. The last of them I found a sacred time; the place, a sacred spot; the work, a sacred employment. Deity felt nigh: yet no remarkable joy attended the divine presence. These last two weeks I have been looking for, and hastening to a more full enjoyment of perfect love. I look to be "filled," (as the Lord hath promised) "with the knowledge of his will; in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that I may walk before him unto all pleasing." O how ardently do I desire this! It is only by faith, I know, that I can attain; but here I am often foiled, and day after day passes on with very little progress. These last days I have, through assistance from above, got through some important business. I see the hand of the Lord in it, and endeavour to give him the glory: but it is better blessings which I covet, and which he hath promised. Come, Lord, from above, fill and overflow my soul with thy pure love, and remove whatever hinders its full course.

April 19. Still I have to record the loving kindness of the Lord; yet not in that degree I long for. I would be thine, O Lord! I would, thou knowest, *be altogether thine*. Come, then, holy God, and work more powerfully in me, and by me. Give a stronger testimony from thy Spirit, for the work wrought in me. My happiest moments are when I believe it, and simply live by faith: but from this point, I am drawn many times by the subtle devices of the adversary and the *multifarious business* in which I am engaged, yet all with a view to duty. Lord, increase my faith. I found, this week, the word preached from, "Walk before me, and be thou perfect," blessed to me. But my experience is so far short of my desires as proves sometimes matter of grief: yet when I consider my unprofitableness and unfaithfulness, I have cause to be thankful for a grain of grace. Yesterday a national fast: I felt something of the spirit of the occasion. I was truly desirous of mourning for a guilty nation, and for myself; and felt humbled on my own account. This day I felt disposed to lie low before God, yet to plead for great things, because Jesus hath purchased them for all that believe and obey him. I would be all life, light, love, power. O Lord, is anything too hard for thee!

May 31. *Prince-street*. The Lord has in mercy heard my requests, for he has turned my captivity, and put a song of praise in my mouth. "O to grace how great a debtor." Since the 17th instant my God has done much for me. He has provided my present habitation as a temporary provision till the

house I have taken for some years, if spared, be ready for me. I literally knew not where to lay my head; but I looked unto the Lord, and he heard and answered. O that I may glorify him! In the many difficulties attending my double removal, he hath supported; and, since I came here, has outdone my expectations, both as to health of body and mind. I am a wonder unto myself: but it is the doing of the Lord, and truly marvellous in my eyes. He gave me repeated tokens for good before I left my last house. According to my desires he sent his ministering servants repeatedly; and much prayer was offered up: and here, also, I have enjoyed that privilege, time after time. In the course of these eight days the Lord has been with us of a truth, and made it a refreshing time. Beyond my hopes, he carried me from here several miles on Sunday last, to commemorate the dying love of Jesus; and truly he made a memorable time. My God shone upon his work in my soul, and greatly brightened my evidences for perfect love. Jesus made himself known afresh to me in the breaking of bread: and when I tasted the cup, a divine sensation seemed to overspread my soul, and even affect my body. I seemed surrounded with the heavenly host. Satan made a bold push to disturb my heaven of indescribable enjoyment; but a stroke of omnipotence drove him far away. What can I render unto the Lord for his goodness!

August 23. Still I have to record the loving kindness of the Lord, which, though much greater than I deserve, is still far short of my desires. On Sunday last, in public, I found my soul sensibly strengthened and confirmed in the ways of God; my heart lifted up, and encouraged to press on with respect to sanctification, notwithstanding the pooriness of my progress and attainments. The moment I allow one thought that would encourage a doubt of the work, I feel like a city without gates; without defence against the adversary; as a ship without its rudder; yea, so feeble that the weakest blast would upset me. On the contrary, every direct act of faith for the blessing is instantly followed with strength of soul, serenity of mind, and a sweet testimony from on high to the work wrought. Yea, I feel as a garrison well fortified; able, through faith in Jesus, to turn the enemy from the gate. But I want a stronger evidence, from the fruit of the Spirit, as a corroborating witness. Give it, O Lord, for thy name's sake. I feel a deep consciousness of my weakness, ignorance, unfaithfulness, unfruitfulness, which is sometimes discouraging.

October 11. (Friday.) Of a truth my God has dealt bountifully with me since my last. I ventured to ask a token for good before I left my temporary habitation in Edinburgh, and he in much mercy granted my desire repeatedly. Monday evening, in public, God the Father and Son drew sensibly nigh, and favoured me with sweet fellowship, and opened my mouth to praise him.

He not only permitted me to dwell upon the sweet subject of his great kindness to me at the time, in my own mind, but constrained me to tell those that love him what he has done for my soul. And on Tuesday, O how graciously did my heavenly Father deal with me while conversing with a minister of Christ; he opened his liberal hand, and gave largely to both; it was a memorable time. O how good is God to the souls that seek him. Yet, in the evening, temptation prevailed, and my soul was grieved: but still my God continued his kindness. I felt ashamed, and fled afresh to the blood of sprinkling. Wednesday was a day of trial and variegated temptation: I endeavoured to flee into my strong hold, that the Lord might lift up a standard. In the evening, came to my new habitation, (*Rosemount*,) which I trust the Lord has provided for me. It is *most certain* he would not *permit* me to go to another I had in view, and wished to have. He so evidently showed me that it would be contrary to his will, I was obliged to desist. Since the time I fixed on this place, (though *at first* he made every mountain of difficulty melt into a mole hill,) it has been a source of trouble and vexation, but since I came to it, he has made it a sweet habitation. I asked a mark of his favour, and in mercy, the morning after I came here, he granted my request repeatedly, both in secret prayer and in reading the Scriptures. He has indeed given me precious seasons; delightful communion with heaven; ineffable sweetness diffused through my soul; divine peace and comfort in private, family, and secret duties. Surely, "where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." One temptation which I had long laboured under, he seems entirely to have removed. O that I may be humble, and thankful, and enabled to improve to the uttermost the loving kindness of the Lord. O that it may increase. Still I see the necessity of *living by faith*; especially for sanctification.

November 1. Since the 11th of October words would fail to tell of the goodness of the Lord, in public and private, at home and abroad, in the house, and by the way; not in exemption *from* temptation; no, but in *support* and *comfort* under it, and in deliverances from it; in repeated manifestations of his love and power; in sweet fellowship with the Father and the Son. At one time, while enduring a flood of temptation, Jehovah drew so nigh, appeared so clear to the eye of faith, so penetrated my soul with a sense of his presence, as might well excite my wonder, love, and praise. He so confounded the powers of darkness, so sensibly lifted up a standard, as made all within confess a present God; and he has thus abode with me ever since, though not always with the same degree of love, joy, or freedom from temptation, yet so as often made me involuntarily express these words, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." In the view of leaving home for a week or two, and travelling

for health, I earnestly asked a token for good, and he condescended to give it, after I had called my family together to request his blessing upon those that went, and those that were to remain. He preserved man and beast, carried through difficulties, disappointed fears, gave courage to own him and his cause in different parts, and with different denominations : and favoured me with numberless opportunities for attempting the spiritual and temporal good of my fellow creatures, and gave power to embrace them. The issue is left with *Him* who knows the end from the beginning, and who can make the feeblest means effectual for the greatest ends. And now, in tender mercy, he hath brought me home, having infinite cause to say, not only that he is the Hearer of prayer, but that "God is love." But I feel much cause to regret that I come so far short in all : that I do not make greater progress when so highly favoured. O Lord, remove the cause, that the effect may cease. My soul longs for greater nearness to God : for more power to glorify and enjoy him ; for more extensive usefulness ; for more holiness ; a clearer witness for the enjoyment of that pure love that casts out fear ; and for more power to live by faith.

Dec. 22. (Friday.) Still my God continues and increases his kindness to a creature unworthy of it. On Thursday, the 14th, he condescended to give me a sweet manifestation of the holy Trinity ; and a very clear perception of the *personality* of the blessed Spirit : more so than for a long time past. This view of the whole Godhead was attended with a divine sweetness, and has been continued ever since, so that I have felt surrounded with Deity : and the testimony of the Spirit for sanctification has at times been peculiarly clear ; more especially just after conversing with a minister upon the subject, and simply expressing my ideas of it, both as a doctrine, and as experienced in a small measure in my own soul, through the great goodness of my God, and for the sake of his adorable Son. O that I may be made faithful, and enabled to press on for every degree of it attainable in the body. Last evening the Lord shone peculiarly clear upon his work in general, and gave me some comfortable hope that I was not standing still, as I feared. This was after many applications to the Hearer of prayer to quicken my pace ; and after many times lamenting my shortcomings, and fearing I was making no progress. O that I could love and serve, a thousand times more, my gracious and compassionate heavenly Father. Lord, increase my ability ; increase my faith. I feel a growing sense of the littleness of all earthly things, and the solemn weight and importance of those belonging to eternity : also, of the uncertainty and shortness of time, and the great necessity of improving it ; and feel strongly drawn to fill up every precious moment with something valuable. I have much cause to praise the Lord for many mercies, spiritual and temporal ; and among

others for a larger measure of health since I came to Rosemount than for a long time before. O that I may use it for Him who gives it. Truly he is the God that performeth all things for me: and my trust is not in an arm of flesh, but in himself, who so often disappoints my fears. I look that he will cause me to end this year, and begin the new one, with much of the divine presence.

TO MRS. JOHNSON.

January 10, 1793.

I take the opportunity of a frank to send a few lines to my friend, whose last was most acceptable. I trust our gracious God still continues his kind and most seasonable support in the midst of various distressing circumstances; and thereby enables you not only to stand in the evil day, but to glory in your infirmities, that the power of the adorable Saviour may rest upon you; that his love may fill and overflow your soul.

“O love, how cheering is thy ray!

● All pain before thy presence flies.”

I am pleased with your accounts of Mrs. G.; I hope my letter to her, enclosed in my last to you, came safe to hand. I feel much liberty in pleading that you, and those who join with you, may be enable to wrestle in mighty prayer; and seem to anticipate your victory. I rejoice that you are returned to your place again; this will strengthen the hands of many, and confirm their feeble knees, who might otherwise have been turned out of the way. And O how pleasing to God to see his dear children steadfast and immovable in trying times; especially those who have been long in the way, and who have borne the heat and burthen of the day. To prevent this, Satan has had recourse to these painful temptations you mention; hoping thereby to fix all your attention upon your own soul, and so lessen your sphere of usefulness. But blessed be our compassionate High Priest, who hath counteracted all his malicious designs against you, and put a song of praise in your mouth.

I have much cause to praise a God of love for his kindness to me since I wrote last. Sweet and repeated have been the precious manifestations of his love; of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost: sometimes together, and at others *distinct* communications of grace, from each sacred person. Since last week, in the class meeting, I seem to have anchored *more sensibly* within the veil. The eye of my soul has been invariably fixed upon *Jehovah*, and his eye most sensibly fixed on me. I surely have this evidence of purity: “*I do see God.*” Yet I have not, I think, such a strong testimony of the Spirit as I sometimes have had, when my views of God were not so clear. At times, I have very humbling views of *self*, and should sink very low, but for that faith that realizes unseen things, and shows me where I

stand. Perhaps these exercises of mind, that so empty one of self in every shape, are preparatory to greater and deeper entrances into the depths of Deity.

"*I do dwell alone.*" These words, one day lately, came very seasonably to my mind, as being the case with God's Israel of old, when tried with various temptations, and, among others, that of *standing alone*. I seem to have none with me. I have indeed a lonely path; but, blessed be my heavenly Father, I have the sacred Three with me. My heart expands with desire for more of God, and for greater usefulness to his people. I would more than ever fill up every moment with, and for God. Assist me, my friend: O let us pray always and never faint. The state of public affairs tries me much. I fly unto my God, and cry that he would yet continue our glorious privileges. But I must finish. May he continually surround you, and keep you as in the hollow of his hands, prays

Your friend in Jesus,

D. MAXWELL.

TO MRS. JOHNSON.

March 22, 1793.

Dear Mrs. Johnson's letter, written in the spirit, was, I hope, perused in it. I feel both my need and the value of a spiritual friend. Your determination I wish ever to abide by: "To have no fellowship with any, but in the Spirit." O may that Holy Spirit knit our thankful hearts more closely to our living Head, the sacred source of calm repose. All the dealings of the Lord with me, for the last twelve months past, have been very *self-humbling*. Many, very many stripping seasons I have had, which seem to discover, more and more, the depth of the fall. I have indeed nothing whereof to boast, nothing but what I have received. I am made truly conscious of my poverty and helplessness; this keeps me, perhaps, more sensible of my dependence than I should otherwise be, and creates and keeps up such a hungering and thirsting after larger measures of the divine life, after God and the possession of all his communicable fulness, as I cannot express. It mightily endears a Saviour to me: his suitability I so deeply feel, that my whole soul rests on him. Added to this, is the appointment, or at least permission, by Him who cannot err, of every possible modification of temptation; with a view, I doubt not, to promote the great and salutary purpose of drawing me more and more out of self, and sinking me deeper and deeper into Deity, till lost in the boundless ocean of love. But my receipts are so far short of my vast desires, that perhaps I am not always so thankful, or so sensible, as I ought to be, of what I have already received. My God is still most sensibly enforcing the necessity of living by simple faith; and indeed it is never better with me than when I do; *every act* brings in an increase. But the combined powers of darkness uniformly

oppose this mode of living. I trust my gracious God will give me a fuller deliverance. Assist me with your prayers till I obtain. I have at times such glorious views of sinking into Jehovah, and of what he is able to do for me, as I cannot explain; of such holy nearness to and fellowship with Jesus as is pleasing to experience: more especially when considered as foretastes of what shall be shortly my permanent experience. The Scriptures do so help, so strengthen and comfort, in all my various situations of soul, as is matter of great thankfulness. Forgive this minute detail.

I bless the Lord, who deals not only tenderly, but bountifully with you; and will, no doubt, in every case show you the most excellent way. He calls at present for a costly sacrifice, which you will doubtless offer freely upon that altar which sanctifies the gift.

I am pleased to hear that Mrs. G. still stands, and I hope you will remember me to her. Tell her, from me, that she is called, in a peculiar manner, in these very trying times, to stand firm, as a wall of brass, and as an iron pillar strong, in every difficulty. And thus, having endured temptation, she shall inherit the blessings annexed to the promises. I hope you will have wisdom given you from above; more and more be enabled to glorify your God, though in the fires; and increase daily in usefulness to his church and people.

I see that your present situation is both critical and difficult, and I endeavour to hold it up to your God daily, who has fitted you for it; and who will make you more than conqueror, through the blood of the Lamb. Go, then, thou servant of God, in his strength, and thy God will be with thee; and level every mountain, and raise every valley. He has given a large sphere of usefulness at this time, but Satan will dispute every inch of ground: yet fear not; he shall fall like Dagon before the ark; only be thou very courageous for the Lord thy God. Forgive the liberty of thus writing, but I feel pressed in spirit to do it. Remember the weakness of the writer, and believe me,

Your friend in the best bonds,

D. MAXWELL.

CHAPTER XXIX.—1794.

Diary and correspondence continued.

January 3. The year 1793 is fled—it is numbered, and returned to Him who gave it. Tell me, O my soul, what report has it carried with it as to thee? Could it say that it was thy constant desire and attempt to improve it for eternity? for the glory of God, the good of thy fellow creatures, and thy own best interest? What shall I say? O my God, if my heart do not

deceive me, in a very low degree this has been the case. In all I have failed, but still at all this I have aimed. Upon a retrospect, I find much cause to thank my God for mercies more in number than the hairs of my head, spiritual and temporal; for precious manifestations of divine love and power; for various discoveries of the will of God; various teachings of the Holy Spirit, more especially respecting faith as to sanctification; and for much countenance in my attempt to live by faith; for many remarkable and speedy returns to prayer for myself and others; for many interpositions in my behalf in troublesome cases and perplexing business; for clear discoveries of the sacred Trinity—of the personality of the Holy Ghost; for much sweet fellowship with the Father and the Son; for some little success in my feeble attempts to promote the spiritual good of others, especially Christians; for power to make many exertions, above my own strength, both in speaking, acting, and writing; for assistance in pecuniary matters, whereby I could more largely help others, &c., &c. When all these mercies, O my God, my wondering soul surveys, what humble, grateful love should fill my heart!

March 7. Of a truth my God has been good to me since the 28th of February. On Sunday, I partook of the supper of the Lord, and, upon the whole, the Lord was good to me; though not so much in the way of joy. On Monday evening, in public, the Lord Jesus surprised me with a glorious visit. With the Father, also, I had fellowship; but the precious manifestation was in a more peculiar manner with the Son. For a long time past, my intercourse has been more sensibly with Jehovah himself, yet through the medium of the Son: there is no other way of access to the Father. O how altogether lovely did Jesus appear! How inexpressibly sweet his love! Words fail to express either; but his presence, I may say, constitutes my heaven. In private, the same night, this goodness was repeated: and through the week my God seemed to bring and keep me near to himself; underneath and around were spread the everlasting arms. But I feel surprised and grieved that I am not more remarkably changed into the divine image by those frequent and delightful manifestations of his love. O my God, roll away my reproach in this respect! and enable me, to the utmost, to take the mould divine—for the glory of thy name, the profit of my fellow creatures, and the comfort of my own soul. O let every intermediate space be filled up with an increase of every grace of the Holy Spirit! Fears, as to public affairs, have increased, and yet liberty to plead with God concerning them continues. Lord God Omnipotent, arise and work for our safety; and O take not the gospel from us; permit us not to fall into cruel hands! Send a spirit of reformation and conversion plentifully down upon us, and stir up thy children to prayer.

April 11. The goodness of my God continues, with the addition of a keener edge on my spirit, to increase with all the increase of the Lord. On last Sabbath, a song of praise was put in my mouth. I felt rejoicing in my God in social prayer and Christian conference. On Monday Jehovah felt very nigh all day; yet I was exercised with painful temptations all the while. On Wednesday evening, it was a sweet time in public; and on Thursday, at home, my God disappointed my fears, and opened my mouth to tell of his goodness to those that fear him. O how gracious is he to an unworthy creature! In the course of these last eight days, he has given me many opportunities of acting for him, which is the delight of my soul. O that he may bless my feeble efforts for his dear Son's sake. Many of my requests, of late, he has answered, and gives me liberty to plead for all I want. He has repeatedly refreshed my soul, and strengthened my hands, by hearing of the success of the gospel in various parts, and among various denominations, abroad and at home. O that a little one may become a thousand. These accounts, in our present awful situation, are peculiarly gratifying. I have also been refreshed by hearing of the steadfastness and prosperity of individuals whose spiritual welfare I have at heart, especially ministers. My God still continues to teach me the useful lesson of living by faith, particularly as to sanctification; but it is a difficult lesson. In all I come short. Help me, holy Father, to press on with renewed vigour; increase my faith; fill, yea, fill with faith and with the Holy Ghost.

May 23. Yet again I am permitted to render thanks to my God for his goodness, in allowing me to enter his gates frequently, and also to prove it good to be there: in comforting me in private by his word and his Spirit; disappointing my fears repeatedly, and strengthening me for what he called for from me. He still teaches me the necessity of living by faith, and gives me to feel, in a measure, the happy effects of it, by its sweetly solemnizing my mind; it brings power into my soul, with comfort and sensible evidence of his work in me, more especially as it respects holiness. O who can tell the value of faith!—Lord, increase it and a power to live by it. I find I need more patience with myself. I am ashamed and grieved that I make so little, if any progress. These last eight days my mind has been pained on this account. I come so very far short of what I would be, and may be. Lord, remove the cause, and let the effects cease. O refresh my soul with a ceaseless shower of thy grace! I pant to live more to thee; to feel a more entire union with Deity; to have stronger and more constant testimony of thy Spirit, both from the witness and fruit of what thou hast done for me and in me. I want every moment to be found in the work of faith, the labour of love, and the patience of hope;

and to experience a greater equality of spirit, temper, and affection.

June 13. Again I am called to make known the loving kindness of the Lord to his dust and ashes, and likewise to testify of my own shortcomings in all things. In general, since the 6th, I have been favoured with much sweet fellowship with God the Father. This I have proved a source of delightful enjoyment, in the midst of various things that had a tendency to unhinge. I have had some stripping seasons. Felt poverty of spirit, and also proved the good effects of it, and of endeavouring to live by simple faith on these trying occasions. How pleasing to the Lord, and how much countenanced by him! On Monday last, especially in the evening, I felt much weighed down from a sense of unfruitfulness and unfaithfulness, though surrounded with many privileges that should produce every degree of spiritual prosperity. While I mused and mourned, God the Father and Son drew remarkably near, gave a glorious view and likewise a taste of that nearness to, and full union with, *Deity*, that is my privilege and his will concerning me: that state of soul where

“Not a cloud doth arise to darken the skies,
Or hide for a moment the Lord from my eyes.”

In short, it felt the most simple and also the most pure state of enjoyment that language can describe. O to feel it every moment!

July 4. Since the 27th of June, I have enjoyed much nearness to the Father and sweet believing views of his work in my soul. I have also had severe and furious attacks from the powers of darkness; much weakness of body, with various trying exercises of mind; yet can truly say in straits my God has been a present aid; disappointing my fears, and sometimes exceeding my expectations; perfecting his strength in my weakness, according to his promise; enabling me to strengthen the brethren, and to enjoy the privilege of the communion of saints; preserving in seasons of danger, and giving opportunities for serving the interests of my fellow creatures, both spiritual and temporal. But I have much cause to grieve for not profiting more; for not making greater progress in the good way; for not bringing more glory to God; more profit and comfort to others. Truly I feel I am an unprofitable servant. *The Lord is God, not man*; therefore he bears with me. O, my God, must I always make my moan! O hasten the time when thou shalt greatly enlarge my capacity to love, serve, and glorify thee.

August 7. Since the 25th of July, it has been a time of close trial, both in body and mind. The fiery darts of the adversary have been very keenly pointed. Weakness of nerves and spirits has added to my painful feelings, and by all these things my

joyous sensations have been very sensibly decreased. Faith in Jesus has been my only resource, with sweet views of God the Father, at times; who has set before me the many deliverances he has wrought for me in times past: and He who hath been with me in six troubles will not forsake me in the seventh. Yet still I am distressed. I feel my spiritual poverty. Lord, undertake for me; and yet let me see thy loving kindness in the land of the living. Fill with that faith which

“———pain and death defies,
Most vig'rous when the body dies.”

Hezekiah's message from the prophet who, by divine command, desired him to set his house in order, for he must die, is often impressed on my mind. O that I may live to God while I live, and die to God when I die.

October 24. Yesterday I returned from a journey south for health. I have cause to praise the Lord, my healer, who gave much freedom from bodily complaints while from home; preservation of man and beast; deliverance in danger; often disappointed my fears; gave sweet visits from on high; communion of saints; hearing the gospel preached; many opportunities for the spiritual and temporal good of my fellow creatures; supplied my temporal wants, and brought me home in peace. He preserved all I left behind, and disappointed the evil designs of others against me in my absence. If they really meant evil, they were returning evil for good: in either case I would wish them well. The few trials I met with on the road, I was supported under; and soon, by prayer, delivered from. Since my return, the enemy has attempted in various ways to disturb my peace; but mine eyes are upon the Lord, and my daily cry is for more faith; and power, every moment, to conquer through it; with more of the fruit of the Spirit and a clear testimony, by the witness of it, for sanctification. I find it difficult to live every moment by faith; yet, without this, I cannot continually realize the presence of God, and be all attention constantly to an indwelling Deity. I have been long learning this important lesson: but O how little my progress, and how condescending my God, who still continues to teach me, and to bear with me! His goodness is inexpressible. The keen force of Satanic temptation, of late, has borne hard upon me. O to be filled with that pure, perfect love that casteth out all fear!

November 28. Since last date, my God has dealt so bountifully with me, and I feel so much of my own unworthiness and unfaithfulness, that I am not only lost in wonder, love, and praise, but also in confusion. I loathe myself when thus my God I see. He has condescended to allow me much sweet communion with himself and with his dear Son; more especially since last Sabbath morning. I desired to meet my God, and truly I was

not disappointed. Jehovah drew so remarkably nigh, as to arrest, as it were, not only the powers of my mind, but also of my body. The former was fixed in deep attention, with a penetrating consciousness of the divine presence: the latter felt as almost immovable, while an indescribable solemnity and sweet serenity overspread my mind. The Lord shone upon his word and my soul. In his light I saw light. I found Jehovah is the pillar upon which my soul rests: his name, the strong tower into which I run, and find safety and comfort. O that his goodness may be improved to the utmost, and returned in living, holy obedience. Since that time I have had lasting communion with him, though far short of what I want. The day following, he made my cup to run over, partly from a prospect of increasing usefulness, and partly by the countenance he gave upon its opening, by inclining others to unite in the attempt. O that the event may show it is of God.

December 12. Still, through mercy, I can record the goodness of my God. On Sunday last, in public, from a sermon on, "This is the will of God, even your *sanctification*," I enjoyed a precious time. The Lord shone on his work in my soul, and, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, I could clearly trace the effects of sanctification, both on the superior faculties of the soul, the understanding, the will, conscience, and memory; and also on the inferior faculties, the passions: including love, hatred, grief, joy, fear, desire, &c., &c.; likewise the appetites. I never remember to have had more evidence from the fruit of the Spirit than on this memorable occasion: so true is it, that we can only see light in God's light, or know the things freely given us of God.

TO MRS. JOHNSON.

February 5, 1794.

Having the favour of a frank for Mrs. C., I gladly embrace the opportunity to acknowledge the receipt of dear Mrs. Johnson's valuable letter, dated December 12, 1793. The contents of your letters are peculiarly suited to my spiritual appetite. I bless our gracious God, who deals so tenderly, so bountifully with you. I think you may say, though poor and feeble yourself,

"My Lord is all the world to me,
And all my soul is love."

O let us praise him for his unspeakable kindness.

Since my last, he has given me sweet communion with himself and his dear Son, through the Spirit, and increases it, drawing me nearer to Deity. The enemy has withstood me greatly; but my God lifts up a standard, and is near to me. I hope, in a small measure, I may say with De Renty, "I carry about with

me an experimental verity and," sometimes, "a plenitude of the presence of the sacred Trinity." I do not know whether in my last I mentioned that my God, some time ago, condescended to give me a glorious view of the *holy Three*, which has continued ever since. O that while permitted to gaze at this grand object, I may be a thousand times more than ever changed into the divine image. *This is my ardent desire*, that every manifestation may prove of an *assimilating* nature; that, as far as humanity will admit, I may be all light, all life, all love, all deep humility. O what a soul-transporting thought, in the midst of present weakness, ignorance, and many humiliating circumstances, that yet a little while and we shall drop this vile body, and be all like God; and dwell for ever with him, and with our adorable Jesus; and bask in the bright beams of redeeming love. When millions of millions of years shall be past and gone, still one vast eternity will be before us. Amazing, that dust and ashes should be thus honoured; it is mystery all! It is mercy boundless! Well, let the thoughts of such astonishing bliss support and even raise us above every present pressure.

In the midst of all this great kindness, my God hath given me lately a constant sense of my shortcomings, of my spiritual poverty: this deeply pervades my whole soul; it is past expression. My only relief is in flying by faith to Jesus; there I bathe me in his bleeding side, and clothe me with his righteous robe, to cover my naked soul; and endeavour to believe till faith brings in more love, &c.; till his Spirit sets his seal to the work wrought in me, notwithstanding my conscious emptiness; and thus I am strengthened by getting out of *self*.

My heart is so enlarged to the poor, especially the Lord's poor, that I am in danger of making myself poor. I find the more I am found in this labour of love, the more the Lord finds out ways and opportunities for it; and sometimes causes others, even the most unlikely, to assist me. O it is a sweet work, to be eyes to the blind, feet to the lame, &c. I should rather say, O it is sweet to act for my God; to give to the Lord, through the medium of his own poor precious people.

My mind is much tried as to public affairs. A wonderful spirit of prayer seems poured upon me, that our country, our gospel, &c., &c., may be preserved. I enjoy liberty in pleading that we may not be given up into the hands of our enemies; but have no promise as yet. I tremble for the ark. How do you feel with regard to these matters? Has Mr. H. arrived? The young man at Hope Chapel is doing well; things look better.

I have ventured to write freely to some of the preachers respecting the present appearances among them; which they forgive, and tell me that the Lord is still doing great things in different places. Write me soon, and refresh my heart, and strengthen my hands; by prayer in secret, and in your bands and

classes. O faithful prayer, what may not be done by it. An
 increase of every spiritual blessing be your portion, prays
 Your friend in Jesus, D. MAXWELL.

TO MRS. JOHNSON.

Rosemount, June 17, 1794.

Dear Mrs. Johnson is upon my mind daily at a throne of grace, but still an embargo has been laid upon my pen. What a mercy is the mutual benefit, by the exchange of a letter now and then, when our almighty Friend graciously permits. O, who is a God like unto our God? Since I wrote last, I have experienced much of the divine goodness—much indescribably sweet nearness to and sinking into Jehovah: holy fellowship with the Father and the Son, which sinks *self* into nothing. My God is ever with me: O how condescending; I can neither express nor explain it, but it is well known to my friend. With all this, I am kept little and poor in my own eyes; experience many stripping seasons and spring tides of painful temptations from the powers of darkness. I believe these enlarge my receptive powers; for frequently, soon after, there is such an influx of Deity, such glorious displays of future glory, as fill with wonder, and love, and silent adoration. I find the truth of these words, "Israel shall dwell alone." I meet with few that understand my language; and if they did, I often find that words cannot convey an adequate idea of the work and ways of the Lord, in these inner and higher walks of the Christian life. And yet I seem so far short of what the Lord often shows me is my privilege, in point of enjoyment and conformity to the divine image, that I feel ashamed; and grieve because my progress is so small. Help me to get forward. I sometimes think that the abstract of my life is a continual passing through the veil of outward things, and gasping to live more fully in God. I am kept in perpetual pursuit of higher attainments, that I may be capacitated to bring more glory to God, as well as to enjoy him more. How clearly is the grand prize set before me! Almost every morning my soul is fired and filled with a holy ambition, for the full possession of every purchased and promised blessing; but still I do not attain: restless, resigned, I wait for it. I long now to find words sufficiently plain to convince you how poor, how unworthy, how unfruitful I am. The Lord knows it, and I feel it; yet cannot properly describe it; but beg you will do me the justice to believe it.

I still feel much on account of public affairs; what adds to my suffering is, the most piercing convictions of the astonishing long suffering, patience, and goodness of the Lord. This penetrates my inmost soul, makes me blush and be ashamed to entreat for our guilty land. I so feel the weight of the iniquity of

us all: and have such views of his consummate wisdom, and boundless love, that I am silent before him; and sink into his will. Yet, again, when I take a view of the distress of my fellow countrymen; what we are exposed to, what variegated misery, &c., I again open my mouth, and plead much.* Prayer is poured forth in public, and private, and secret; great the exertions for the spread of the gospel at home and abroad; and the Lord is greatly reviving his work in some parts of England. These things lead me to think he will not make an utter end of us; but chastise us in a measure.

I was led very remarkably to the appointing an hour of prayer, every morning, from seven to eight, to entreat the Lord for mercy, in the present painful crisis of church and state; I proposed it also to many, both clergy and private Christians, high and low; and they have most cordially engaged with me, to meet at a throne of grace in our several apartments. The Lord has given much liberty hitherto to several. Will Mrs. Johnson give us the aid of her prayers, and mention it to some of her precious fellow pilgrims?

How does the Lord's work prosper in your hands? Is peace yet restored to contending parties? We have sweet times here in the select band, and in the class which meets in my house. O how fully does Jehovah reveal himself in the latter!

If I can procure time, I will enclose a few lines to Miss R.: if not, tell her I will write her the first opportunity. This long epistle requires an apology. I forgot to say that my daily petitions ascend that all your corporeal powers and mental faculties may be continued in vigour, till you are called hence. Believe me, with Christian regard,

Your fellow pilgrim, &c.,

D. MAXWELL.

CHAPTER XXX.—1795.

Diary and correspondence continued.

Jan. 2. On a retrospect of the last year, I find much cause to say God has dealt well and kindly with me. My receipts of mercy have been many; for soul, body, and outward estate. At times, the intermediate space has been checkered with various trials: yet still I have been supported under them, and often delivered from them. My heart has been enlarged toward the poor in general, and to the household of faith more particularly; and my powers of supply have been increased. In the course of the year I have been much tried with one particularly painful exercise, which has seemed rather to weaken than strengthen my hands; but has been permitted for good reasons. The Lord has

* The habeas corpus act was suspended at this time in England.

more sensibly than usual owned my attempts for his glory and the good of my fellow creatures. Agreeably to my request, he gave me a token for good on the last day of the year; but the first day was ushered in with more unexpected trials. May all be blessed! I am again called to rejoice on account of the great success of the gospel, more especially in Ireland. Lord, continue and increase it, and in many places!

March 13. (Friday.) Still I have to acknowledge the receipt of mercies, spiritual and temporal. On Sabbath last, I found it good to wait on God in public. From the text, Revelation iii, 2, 3, I was led to examine if I had lost ground: if I had fallen from my first love. In the presence of the Searcher of hearts, I found liberty to conclude I had not; on the contrary, my love was more matured; my knowledge of God, and of the things of God, sensibly increased; my nearness to Deity greater; the manifestations of his love and power more frequent; and my power to confess and act for him, his cause, and people, sensibly increased. But still I felt cause to lament that I had not been more faithful, more fruitful, and also to admire the long suffering patience of my God toward me. Found Christian fellowship on last Sabbath strengthening, and still more so on Tuesday evening; and, on Thursday morning, the communion of saints was, of a truth, most refreshing. Jehovah appeared clear to the eye of faith, and his presence was most sensibly experienced by those present. I felt increasing power to mention his great and condescending kindness to me, to those that feared his name. I bless him, he is daily teaching me lessons of faith and love, and helping me to improve them to the utmost. He gives me many sweet proofs that he is the Hearer of prayer, and in many instances disappoints my fears, and gives many opportunities of acting for him, both by more immediately promoting his cause and more remotely assisting his people.

April 3. (Friday.) Through the tender mercy of my God I have continued to enjoy a measure of the blessing bestowed on Monday week. On Sunday last, in the morning, in public, the Lord comforted me by his smiles and presence during a lecture from the 29th, 30th, and 31st verses of the 11th chapter of Hebrews, especially the 31st. He also gave me comfortable seasons in secret prayer. Having several difficult services and duties to perform in the course of the past eight days, I was enabled to trust in the Lord, and he helped me, and brought me through them all: though not so as to please *myself*, yet so as to gain the *acceptance* of those for whom they were designed. I may say; in some sense, with the psalmist, through my God I leap over walls, and overcome troops. He gives me to *see* and *feel* how feeble and weak I am; how inadequate to any exertion; and yet, he brings me through many difficulties: and, had I stronger faith, I should see greater things than these. Lord, increase my

faith ! This last week he has given me a *most unexpected* opportunity of serving his cause : O that he may sensibly countenance the attempt ! Have been more tempted for some days past than usual, from a quarter that pains me. I see the cloven foot : give, Lord, the victory, and thine shall be the glory ! I am *too outward*. I have need to pray to be more constantly and religiously recollected ; more attentive to an indwelling God ; every moment realizing his presence. O my God, do these things for me, that I may glorify thee more ; may profit others, and enjoy more constant communion with Deity in my own soul. Still prospects are gloomy respecting public affairs, but since last date I have had the comfort of a spirit of prayer. Meetings for prayer are prevailing in many parts of America, among various denominations, who are all heartily uniting in supplicating a throne of grace for mercy in these troublesome and perilous times ; also in Edinburgh, Glasgow, &c , &c. The Lord hear and answer in mercy !

June 26. He that is rich in mercy hath dealt with a bountiful hand toward me since last date. On Saturday last, in the morning, while by the way, my Jesus felt delightfully nigh ; my views of him, and my relation to him, clear. In the evening when in social prayer Jehovah seemed to fill the place with his presence. In a moment I felt wrapped up in Deity ! all around was God ! and all within confessed his nearness ! I enjoyed much sweet liberty in pleading with him. On Sabbath, enjoyed the privilege of his house, and afterward the communion of saints. On Monday, when with others, in an unexpected moment, again Jehovah broke in upon my soul, and I felt swallowed up in a penetrating sense of the divine presence ; lost in wonder. O that these frequent manifestations may answer great purposes ! My soul breathes for this, and for their continuance ! at least, for a permanent power to endure, every moment, as seeing the Invisible : for uninterrupted fellowship with the sacred Three, so far as fallen nature will permit. On Thursday, was favoured with greater privileges than were expected, which also required greater exertion than usual ; but my God carried me through, though not with so much comfort as on some similar occasions. But if he is glorified, and his creatures profited, I am satisfied. Upon the whole I hope I get nearer to God : but have much to bear from myself. My soul thirsts for a more enlarged sphere of usefulness, and greater faithfulness in that I move in at present. I want stronger evidences of sanctification both from the fruit and witness of the Spirit : and more *equality of spirit, temper, and affection*.

— 28. Friday and Saturday last were days of unusual languor. I felt unable for any vigorous exertion, either of faith or works ; and was pained thereby and humbled. In these trying seasons I avoid all *examination and reasoning*. The latter I

have been much freed from, since I tasted the pure love of God. I prove the frequent actings of *simple faith* the most profitable exercise of mind at these times. On Sunday a happy change took place. I was in a very peculiar degree in the spirit on the Lord's day, and tasted largely of the good word of God, and felt in the most lively manner the powers of the world to come, from the time I entered the house of God. The words of the second hymn led me involuntarily to self-examination. when the Lord seemed to bring to my remembrance the whole of his dealings with me in the work of conversion. He showed me that I had not rested in the drawings of the Father, but followed with a heart sincere while under them; clearly pointed out the time, and place, when he first gave me a sense of his forgiving love; and afterward made me a happy partaker of his pure love. Not that these memorable seasons had ever been forgotten by me; no, while memory lasts they will ever be deeply engraven on it; but I found this a corroborating evidence of the truth of the Lord's work in my soul; more especially from the beginning of an exposition on 3d, 4th, 5th, and 6th verses of the 24th Psalm. Jehovah seemed to fill the place with such a solemn sense of his presence as penetrated my inmost soul; and arrested not only the powers of the mind, but of the body: all was *still*, and *all* confessed, *God is here*. No actings of faith seemed necessary on my part. For the time faith seemed lost in enjoyment: not in *ecstatic joy*; but solemn awe and silent love; both which, in a peculiar manner, mark all my interviews with *Jehovah*. Toward the close, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, made me equally sensible of their presence: the undivided Trinity seemed to overshadow me; and I had a clearer view of the personality of the Holy Ghost than for some time past. Except on these remarkable occasions when he is thus set before me, I am generally led to view him as the divine Agent in man's salvation; who, from time to time, takes of the things of Christ, and shows them unto his people as his peculiar office. This most remarkable manifestation continued all the day, and through mercy to the present moment: only with this difference, that my fellowship is still more with the Father himself. My great desire is to prove the transforming influence of these gracious visits; and I am aware, also, how requisite, how necessary it is to double my guard by watching and prayer; lest the arch adversary gain any advantage over me, and I should grieve the Holy Ghost. Lord, assist me, and make me grateful.

July 10. Still my God continues to do me good, and visits, I trust, *for that purpose*, alternately with joys and sorrows: the former comforts and supports; the latter empties of *self*, as it respects *confidence* and *complacency*; and thereby fits the soul for greater discoveries of the love of God, through the gospel channel, without the danger of spiritual pride; and leads by a

blessing to the transforming influence of these merciful visitations. Yet, exclusive of powerful renewals of them, how soon does a *lively sense* of the most lively manifestations of divine love die away : how much am I then indebted to a gracious God for so frequently repeating them. Lord, what can I render to thee ! O enable me to surrender myself more unreservedly to thy honour, and glory, and cause ; and enlarge my temporal borders for this purpose. On Sunday last, my God exerted his power in my behalf, out of weakness made me strong, and carried me a considerable way from here to commemorate the dying love of Jesus ; *where and when* as much of the divine goodness was allowed me as the body would permit. Soon after was visited with bodily affliction, which threatened to be severe ; but the progress of the disease was soon checked by Him who hath all things in the natural, moral, and religious world under his control. Though my pain was great, and my mind much flattened by it, yet I did not lose a sense of what the Lord had bestowed on me on his own day, neither have I to the present moment. My heart's desire is, the sanctified use of every dispensation ; with a will still more swallowed up in the divine will. I have to record, to the glory of my God, and his condescending goodness, that he has done away the unexpected trials mentioned formerly, and given me my desire respecting the subjects of them. Truly, "it is better to trust in the Lord than in princes." O my God, continue and increase thy goodness ; quicken my powers ; give still stronger evidence of thy purifying love ; more power to live by faith : and cordially to embrace all thy will.

TO THE REV. ALEXANDER MATHER.

July 11, 1795.

Your letters, Rev. sir, are always welcome, but your last I received with peculiar satisfaction ; fearing, though conscious of the purity of my intention, that my last had either offended or grieved. I sincerely thank you for taking in a Christian spirit what I took the liberty of suggesting. My conscience bears me witness, I have no desire in this painful business, but that light may be given to discover the will of God ; and power and inclination to walk in it. The work is his ; and I believe the workers are all his also, and all aim at the *same mark* ; the glory of their divine Master, and the good of precious souls : though their views, as to the best method of securing these great ends, are different. I used to be partial to the old plan, of communicating in the church ; and thought that being no distinct body, but ready to assist all parties, was the way the Lord owned, and the most likely for extensive usefulness. I believe this was Mr. Wesley's judgment also ; and that he ever in *any measure* departed from it, was, I believe, in consequence of his *original design*, of

following the openings of providence. And, could this be always clearly known, and embraced in a spirit of love, all would be well. Love will prove a strong cement to unite the whole body; and if, in particular places, circumstances make it expedient to differ from the general plan with respect to giving the sacrament, &c., still there will be no breach; all may *love* alike, though they do not *act* in every tittle alike. But I forbear, and would conclude by saying, through mercy I enjoy sweet inward liberty, having no party feelings, but earnestly desiring the will of God, the union of preachers, and great success in the work assigned to each, I would trust, by their great Master.

I pray that you may meet in a spirit of love, continue in it, during the discussion of many important points; and depart in it, full of faith and of the Holy Ghost.

It was with peculiar satisfaction I received your accounts of the prosperity of the work. May it increase with all the increase of God; and a larger share of it be your portion, as a proof to all that the Lord is with you. I shall be anxious, if you can spare a minute, to inform me how matters have gone. I trust the sound of division or discord shall not wound my ear.

I must add (as I always write freely to you) my obligations to redeeming love increase: my fellowship with the Father, of late, is particularly deep and sweet: and from time to time I am favoured with remarkable manifestations of divine love. Do let me know how to improve them to the utmost; how to grow up into Christ my living Head more rapidly. The more I live by simple faith, the clearer is the witness for purity of heart. At present, I feel becalmed in the ocean of redeeming love. Lately, I have been much tried, tempted, and variously exercised. But even then, O how graciously nigh was my God; making even my enemies at peace with me. His goodness beggars all expression.

But lest I be tedious, as your time is much occupied, I will conclude. No remarkable increase here. Mr. B. is useful to individuals, and much liked. Messrs. C. and E., if removed, will, I hope, be succeeded by those united to the place. Wishing Mr. Mather an increase of every purchased and promised blessing, I remain his well wisher in Jesus,

D. MAXWELL.*

TO MRS. JOHNSON.

October 19, 1795.

I have long wished to hear from Mrs. Johnson, and at times, when in secret, before the Lord, have been led to think she was

* The above letter shows the solicitude felt by Lady Maxwell for the welfare of that body of Christians to which she was united, at a time when the discussion of certain points of discipline threatened, for a short season, to disturb the peace and unity of the connection.

under the rod. His Spirit has enabled me to plead for her, as thus situated; and by recent accounts from Mrs. C., I find my apprehensions were just. Your God, as formerly, I doubt not has been with you in the furnace; to support, to comfort, and to make you sing for mercy, as well as judgment. Perhaps you will not thank me for saying that I hope the Lord will keep you a little longer in this vale of tears, and give you to see yet more of the fruit of your labours, for his name's sake. By your last, some months ago, it appeared he was enlarging your sphere of usefulness; I hope it is still the case.

Much praise is due to the Father of mercies for the *peace* and *union* he has *restored* to our Zion; it is his own doing, and may well be marvellous in our eyes. O that the happy fruits of it may more and more appear. During the long and painful agitation, my mind was kept in peace, free from prejudice and undue warmth; endeavouring to commit both parties to him, that both might be led into his holy will. And O, how graciously hath he dealt with both: surely he heareth prayer. Deep and sweet has been my fellowship with the sacred Three since I last wrote, but more especially with God the Father; rich and frequent the discoveries of his love, *his perfect love*. The teachings of his Spirit, and humbling views of *self*, have been very clear; and he seemed to empty, in order to fill. I prove these stripping times very favourable to a life of *simple faith*. Eternity will not be too long wherein to praise my God, for the lessons he hath taught me, respecting this great duty and privilege of living by faith. Great are its effects; but I am slow in learning the lessons of his grace, though he condescends to give line upon line and precept upon precept. Sweet has been my enjoyment, and many my advantages, in being taught to put in practice the lessons he has given me of *trusting in him*, in every situation; but especially in difficult cases. He *has*, and *does* point out my way, giving me to hear, as it were, a voice, (though no articulate sound,) "This is the way, walk ye in it:" so strong has been the notice upon my mind, of the path of duty. He is indeed a soul-satisfying portion; *he is my God and my all*. But though thus blessed at times, I have seasons of close trial; the combined powers of darkness seem engaged against me, while there appears no power *in me* to combat such powerful foes, such an army of aliens: yet simply looking to Jesus by faith, endeavouring to trust in the Lord my God, abstracted from creature, looking above them, I am supported. I am delivered so evidently by the arm, not of flesh, but of *Jehovah himself*, that nothing is left me wherein to glory. I am sweetly constrained to give the glory where alone it is due. I have admired the goodness of my God of late, that, even in the heat of battle, he hath made my evidences of his pure love strong, even to meridian brightness; much more so than when

there was peace in all my borders. This appeared the more remarkable to me, because I always seemed to be sensible of a deficiency on such occasions.

For a week or two past, I have felt a degree of heaviness through manifold temptations; but by quietly trusting in the Lord, and avoiding all hasty conclusions, he has given me clearly to see that his work is going on in my soul. To him I would leave the way and manner. My soul uniformly desires the prosperity of Zion; it seems my meat and drink to promote it: and he, in his adorable providence, still opens many unexpected ways, and shines on my feeble attempts.

But I have been particularly tried lately by the loss of a young man, who has been of great use to me. He taught my week-day school, consisting of fifteen children; and superintended my Sunday school, in which there are at present upward of sixty young men, remarkably alive to God; and many young women, truly desirous to flee from the wrath to come. Many hundreds also flocked to hear him on the Lord's day evening, to whom he appeared greatly blessed. But he and many others thought the light shone clear for his going to Sierra Leone as a missionary. Do pray for a successor according to God's own heart; and that my poor labours may be increased, and my own soul greatly blessed.

Remember me kindly to Miss Ritchie. I have long expected to hear from her. Wishing you a still deeper acquaintance with the sacred Three; still more power to glorify Him who liveth for ever; and an interest in your prayers that I may wax stronger and stronger, "sink deeper and rise higher;" and with many prayers for the prosperity of your society, and Christian respects to Mrs. Cole and Atmore, I am dear Mrs. Johnson's friend in Jesus,

D. MAXWELL.

CHAPTER XXXI.—1796.

Diary and correspondence continued.

January 5. (Friday.) Still I find cause to make mention of the loving kindness of the Lord. Since last Friday my God has, in various ways, shown me his goodness. On Sunday last, I was permitted to show forth the death of Jesus, when he spoke to my heart by his servant. He has allowed some sweet seasons in secret prayer, with much of the communion of saints. Yesterday, as he often does on that day, he was remarkably gracious when with a few of his children in social prayer. Jesus drew sweetly and most sensibly nigh: O how glorious did he appear to the eye of faith! how altogether lovely! How irresistibly

attractive his love! Through him, I had access to Jehovah, whose divine presence I as sensibly felt; but it was all in the dignity of God the Father, which solemnized my mind, and filled with sacred awe, so that I rejoiced with deep reverence. This distinction, in the manifestation of divine love proceeding more immediately from Jehovah himself, uniformly marks all the intercourse I am privileged to enjoy with him. I pant for power to improve it more, by earnest prayer. I feel as if hitherto I had asked nothing, while the Lord seems to say, "Ask, and receive, that your joy may be full." Through mercy, I am still kept as in the dust. My views of *self* are truly humbling; and I am still desirous of lying lower, as preparatory to larger attainments in the divine life. My evidences of sanctification have not been so clear. I have been resting too much in present enjoyment; but the Lord calls on me to press forward. I get more extensive views of entire devotion of heart and life. Help me, holy Father, to attain. I am drawn to a greater and more constant realizing of the divine presence, and to an enduring as seeing Him who is invisible.

March 25. (Friday.) I have nothing to say for myself, if it is not to confess and mourn over my shortcomings. I feel it painful to have this so often to repeat: but so it is. O my God, shall I ever live at this poor dying rate: forbid it, gracious Lord. Let a stroke of omnipotence set me free, from this inability to live up to my privileges. I would, with thy servant of old, be able to say, though "of myself I can do nothing, through Christ strengthening me I can do all things." Hasten, holy Father, the happy time.

Had again another opportunity of renewing my engagement to be the Lord's, at his own table, on Sunday last, where he was gracious. When joining the congregation, in that delightful part of public worship, singing the praise of God, the great Master of the gospel feast came down in the power of his Spirit. Jesus felt nigh, and very precious, during a sermon from the 5th and 6th verses of the 53d chapter of Isaiah. God the Father also condescended to visit with a sweet sense of his presence. My inmost soul felt pierced with deep astonishment at the height and depth of redeeming love. It seemed a mystery, my limited understanding could not comprehend, and, indeed, how should *finite* minds fully understand the doings of an *infinite* Being. I bless the Lord, who has given me to *believe* and *taste* of redeeming love, which is more necessary; and daily to thirst after an increase. On the whole, it was a most solemn time, and, I hope, profitable. On Monday had a sweet visit from the adorable Son of God, when at a throne of grace. In the evening, a spirit of prayer seemed to rest on me while joining with a few living souls; some of whom were wrestling with the Lord, in all the power of prayer, in behalf of all present, of the work of God,

and for the best interests of mankind in general. Jehovah came down; my whole soul confessed a present God. O why do not these precious manifestations, so often repeated, prove of a more transforming nature. O my God, remove the cause, that I may praise thee. The Lord has granted another of my requests, since last date, and one more seems in a good train. Surely he heareth the cries of his children. O my God, remember especially *one* of these still unanswered; it is well known to thee, with *the* necessity of it. Let me have cause to praise thee for a favourable answer to it before I again take up my pen.

April 8. (Friday.) Again I take up my pen, and though I have mercy to record, still I feel cause to mourn. For some weeks, I seem to have been brought into straits, that I might see a display and breaking forth of the glory of my God afresh. For *this* I have waited, and looked, and prayed; but still his chariot wheels delay. At times I must own there has been something of this kind; but it was not lasting. Yesterday, for a few minutes, I prayed to him as circumstances would permit, and of a truth he quickly answered; prayer brought him down; in a moment he was nigh; and I felt that "where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." A song of praise was put in my mouth: it seemed as if I were on holy ground. A reverential awe, sweetly tempered with love, rested upon me. The second person in the adorable Trinity also visited me, and brought with him a heaven of love. I felt as if Deity was present, and passing quickly by me; yet leaving the divine impress behind. My mouth was opened; I was saved from sterility of thought, and barrenness of expression; and I made mention of the loving kindness of the Lord: when he is nigh, every mountain flows down, and streams break out in the desert. On Sabbath morning last, also, in public, I felt a lively, deep, solemn sense of the presence of Jehovah; it seemed to arrest all the powers of my mind; but it is something still greater, and permanent, that I look and long for. Strongly impressed with the necessity of constant prayer, I would be pouring out my heart continually; yet often when I bow my knee all my kindling ardours die away, and at night have the mortification to find another day gone, and little gained: I feel bowed down on these accounts. Shall my desires always so far outstrip my attainments? O my Father, let it not be. In temporal concerns, *desire* is termed the hectic of the fool; but not so surely in spiritual matters. Convince me, O thou Hearer of prayer, that it is not.

September 30. (Friday.) Since my last, my joys and comforts have run in a low channel. At times, when calling to remembrance the goodness of my God, immediate comfort has sprung up in my heart; but it has not long continued. Temptations have not been wanting, to call in question what was spoken from on high. It has been asked, "Has the Lord indeed

said so?" This hath been the manner of the grand adversary of God's people from the beginning. Lord, counteract all his malicious designs against me, and enable me to rise superior to them all. Upon the whole, since Saturday last, I have felt much languor of spirit, which grieves me; yet my God hath given me victory, sensible victory in some cases, and I look for more. I have felt much the want of a wrestling spirit in secret prayer; yet have proved it good to wait on the Lord in that exercise. I have been in heaviness through manifold temptations and some perplexities. I feel we are come to a most eventful period. Great events seem in the womb of providence; prospects are dark as to some things, and cheering as to others: judgment seems at hand. And yet the right hand of the Lord is in appearance made bare in the conversion of sinners in many places; in a growing spirit of prayer poured on multitudes; and the hearts of thousands are stirred up to seek the conversion of heathen nations; while a spirit of inquiry seems resting on many of God's ancient people; with other appearances that would lead to hope the time for their returning is drawing nigh. Lord, thou knowest all things, and sittest at the helm of affairs, with the reins of providential government in thy hands: this is matter of solid comfort to thy people. O shine more fully on the soul of thy handmaid, and enable her in every situation so to trust in thee as to be kept in perfect peace. Have mercy on our sinful island, seemingly ripe for judgments. Help, Lord, for the glory of thy name.

October 28. (Friday.) My God has been gracious since last date. On Sabbath last, the word preached in the morning, from Rev. xx, 12, he made a word of consolation, of quickening, of instruction: Deity felt very nigh. By faith, I had such a realizing view of the triumphant entry of the Lord Jesus into heaven upon his ascension, after having finished his great work in the redemption of mankind, as astonished me. Lord, make it profitable. On Monday evening, in my way to the house of the Lord, *God the Father* so manifested himself to me as I can nowise express. For a moment, I started back, fearing it might prove a prelude to great sufferings, but soon recovered; and still, when I look up to him, he feels at hand. How is it, Lord, that I do not make greater progress? Thou art good, and my soul pants after the full possession of every new-covenant blessing. O Lord, transform me more fully into the divine image; and let thy Spirit witness with mine that I do love thee with all my heart. O fill me with the fruit of the Spirit, and make me much more useful to thy church and people. Thou knowest I esteem this my highest honour and richest privilege. I fear living a useless life: forbid it, Lord. I deeply feel my shortcomings, let me not always make my moan: put a song in my mouth, and enable me every moment to live by faith upon thy Son. Without

him, I can do nothing. The tide of satanical temptation has not run so high these last eight days. May patience have its perfect work in every trying time.

Dec. 30. In the course of providence, I am brought now very near the close of another year. O that every revolving season may find me improved and advanced in the divine life. I would hope, in some degree, they meet me most sincerely aiming at this; and that, though slowly, they find me in motion. Greatly quicken it, gracious Lord. Yesterday my God gave me a token for good. In the midst of hurry, he drew unexpectedly near, and spread a heavenly tranquillity through my mind; and just after opened my mouth remarkably in conversation with one of his own ministering saints upon the rich privileges of the Christian even in this life. Soon after, when with three of his ministering servants, in the course of prayer, praise, and Christian conference, he renewed the view of the sacred Trinity given me last week, and we all found it good to wait on God. After dinner, I found much liberty of speech on the peculiar enjoyments of the Lord's people who live up to their privileges; those of them that are taught from on high to live by simple faith on the Son of God. Lord, teach me this important lesson more fully. Still I am kept in constant pursuit of higher attainments in the divine life. Do, holy Father, give them, and cause me also to sink lower in my own eyes, and to rise higher and get nearer to thee. In general, the great object of entire devotion is set before me every morning, and strongly thirsted after: but O, how slowly do I move, and through what a crowd of hinderances. Through the day was kept in the midst of trial, and made thankful for it. Evermore, Lord, make manifest thy strength in my weakness.

TO MISS RITCHIE.

June 28, 1796.

After a long interval, I had the satisfaction to receive dear Miss Ritchie's letter the end of April. I had no design to drop the correspondence, and am pleased that an opportunity now opens for renewing it, though my situation does not always admit of those regular returns I could wish. Since I wrote last, my obligations to redeeming love have been greatly increased. In vain would I attempt to enumerate them; they are, indeed, more than the hairs of my head. Time would fail to tell of the numberless manifestations of divine love and power. I have, though deeply unworthy, been favoured with such wonderful lettings into Deity as no language can describe or explain; but the whole soul dilates itself in the exquisite enjoyment; so refined, so pure, so tempered with sacred awe, so guarded by heavenly solemnity, as effectually to prevent all irregularity of desires; these, with every power of the mind, bow in holy subjection

before Jehovah. Surely the feelings of the soul, on these memorable occasions, are nearly similar to those enjoyed by the heavenly inhabitants. I have it still to remark, that all my intercourse with *God the Father* is strongly marked with that superior solemnity and awe which lay and keep the soul in the dust, yet raise it to that holy dignity which flows from a consciousness of union with Deity : and love matured makes it the willing servant of all for Christ's sake.

My full heart could say much on this delightful subject, but necessary calls to various duties oblige me to abridge my views and experience of these deep things of God. What follows must be a short abstract. In the course of a few years past, I have made sensible progress in *self-knowledge* ; learned not only the depth of the fall, but the universality of its effects upon every power of the human mind. These have been humbling, but profitable lessons, and have proved preparatory to larger measures of grace—more especially to that near and dear fellowship with Jehovah which he has condescended to allow me for some considerable time. During this period he has also stooped to teach me largely of the nature of simple faith ; how necessary to stability in the ways of God ; how requisite for uninterrupted communion with heaven ; how pleasing to Jehovah ; how effectual in counteracting the malicious designs and subtle devices of the great adversary of man ; how powerful to support the soul when called to combat with the combined powers of darkness, in the absence of heavenly joys, which otherwise would have sunk it into the mire of evil reasoning. Too much cannot be said of this wonder-working principle. Yet I am well aware that it has no intrinsic value of itself, but only as it stands connected with its great object, the Lord Jesus Christ. The farther I go in the divine life, the more enlarged are my views of the Christian's privileges, so that I am constrained to forget the things that are behind. I herein see the wisdom and goodness of my God, who thus prevents the danger of sinking too deep into present enjoyment. My whole soul says he doth all things well. It is almost impossible to say how far I find myself behind, both in Christian experience and also in activity in the ways and cause of God : though my heart beats high for a more enlightened sphere of usefulness, and much more fidelity in the one in which I now move.

The Lord, I see, is still dealing very graciously with Miss Ritchie. How profitable are trials ! She proves this, and also enjoys the peculiar comforts that are allowed under the cross, while both are improved for the glory of God and the profit of her fellow creatures. There is a wide field for this in Bristol and its environs. I hope the conciliating measures and manners of Mrs. J. and yourself will, by the blessing of the Most High, greatly promote Christian love and union among the Lord's people.

Please give Christian love and best wishes to Mrs. J. with Christian respects to Mrs. Cole and Atmore. I wish also to be remembered to Mr. and Mrs. P., and the many precious souls I had the privilege of being acquainted with at Bristol. I should be happy to hear that every dispute was lost in love, and the work of the Lord prospering greatly : then they would willingly grant me the aid of their warmest addresses at a throne of grace for my rapid progress in the ways of God. I never esteemed an interest in the prayers of the Lord's people so highly as now.

Many interruptions have caused numberless inaccuracies in this tedious epistle ; all which, I doubt not, will be overlooked by Miss Ritchie, whose friend I subscribe myself, with Christian love,

D. MAXWELL.

TO THE REV. ALEXANDER MATHER.

July 11, 1796.

I meant, long before now, to have told you that it was with satisfaction I perceived you had taken up your pen in defence of that important branch of doctrine and experience so little known by many Christians, and experienced by fewer, *entire sanctification*. Is the small manuscript treatise upon that subject, a sight of which you favoured me with some years ago, never to see the light ? I wish you would go forward in the strength of the Lord, and furnish us with a little volume ; complete, both as to doctrine and experience. It would, at least, be strengthening to those whose minds have been so far enlightened as to believe the former, and enjoy the latter, in a small measure. It might, also, by the blessing of the Lord, be very useful in removing prejudices from the minds of honest, though ignorant inquirers ; and make the precious truth more extensively known. Hitherto its boundaries are within the line of Methodism : and, alas ! how partially received even there. But there is reason to believe the time hastens on when this line shall be stretched over the Christian world. Hail, auspicious day ! Let me entreat you, dear sir, to exert all your powers to embalm this *precious truth*. Perhaps there are not many preachers in the connection so much master of the subject. It will be rendering an essential service to the Christian world in general, and to the Methodist connection in particular. But I forbear : in this and all other matters, may you be taught of *God himself*.

With respect to myself, I am still enabled to testify of the goodness of the Lord. My fellowship with *Jehovah* is most sensibly increased of late. At times, I am favoured with such lettings into Deity as far exceed my barren powers of expression. I do not feel sterility of thought so much, for the Lord condescends to give such glorious views of the Christian's privileges, and by the light of a luminous faith enables me so to

realize future and unseen things as I sometimes think is surely akin to the beatific vision. O what heights and depths I see before me! What, as yet unexperienced, degrees of nearness to, and close walking with, and rich enjoyment of, the sacred Three! but more especially with *Jehovah*. I feel such a sinking into him, such a conscious union with him, as lays me in the dust before him, and keeps me there. I never had, till of late, such piercing convictions of my *nothingness*. Language fails to express what I feel of this; and I suppose it must increase as I get nearer to the *Fountainhead*: till I am swallowed up and lost in the ocean of pure love. In the meantime, all my powers seem gathered up and centred in God, who allows me a holy familiarity with himself that stamps a conscious dignity upon the soul, and seems to fit me for *present* duty, however above my natural abilities. This assistance is afforded in a way that proves its divine origin; keeps me little in my own eyes; disposed to give the glory where alone it is due. I do reap still much benefit from living by simple faith; it, indeed, brings "deep peace and present power."

I have to remark now, more than ever, the fulness of the divine presence in our little class meeting here; and something still more remarkable, (as there is often only myself, and sometimes two or three preachers,) there is for the time an uncommon power given me to express my own experience. I seem carried above my own words, thoughts, and above my whole self, upon the subject of entire devotion. In my little way, on these occasions, my experience is much upon that subject. I have thought this must be for others. If I can throw in even a mite into the divine treasury, I shall esteem it a peculiar privilege. I pray that you may all meet in the spirit of love and forbearance at the conference, and that the *Almighty fiat* may sanction your every determination: then all will be just as it should be. Wishing you much more than ever of the divine presence, and a still fuller testimony of the destruction of the bitter root, with the sealing of the Spirit unto redemption's day; I am, Rev. sir, in Christian bonds,

Your faithful, humble servant,

D. MAXWELL.

CHAPTER XXXII.—1797.

Diary and correspondence continued.

February 24. (Friday.) Still I live, because my God is good. In the course of these eight days, I have at times been rather depressed on account of unfruitfulness. I would be all for God—every nerve strung with holy ardour of desire to promote his

cause upon earth ; and yet I seem to do nothing. Lord, if it is thy will, enlarge my sphere, and make me more faithful in the present narrow one in which I move. Thou knowest every particular in my present situation, and what my hinderances are, and can easily remove them. The perilous situation of our land occupies many of my thoughts and words, both to God and man. Matters seem now to draw to a painful crisis. Blessed God, interpose ! undertake our cause : and, if not contrary to thy will, and derogatory to thy glory, yet spare ; and let the bitter cup pass from us, at least for a season. O hear the unceasing prayers and supplications that are ascending from every quarter ; in public, private, and secret. Thou hast often, in former days, appeared remarkably for our sinful island. Thou changest not. If our cup of iniquity be not already full, O gracious Lord, yet assist us in our extremity ! If it be, O spare thy own people ;—cover their heads—hide them in the hollow of thy hand ! Speak, Lord, for the glory of thy name.

March 3. (Friday.) I have some reason to believe that the Lord has heard, and answered, since last date. He has put work in my hand I did not expect, and owned me in it, after convincing me deeply of unfruitfulness. Last week I had a particular call in providence, not only to arise myself, and pray for our guilty land, but to urge others to join me in the important work of intercession. This call the Lord has so owned as to leave not a shadow of doubt that it came from himself. He has inclined many to unite in the sacred work ; favoured with much liberty at a throne of grace ; great comfort has been experienced by some ; together with such a strong stimulus to prayer as has not often been found on former occasions ; all which gives encouragement to believe solid good will be the result. Grant it, gracious Lord, for thy name's sake : and, though the beginning is small, let it greatly increase.

— 10. (Friday.) Since the 3d instant, the Lord of heaven and earth, whom winds and waves obey ; who giveth victory or defeat, by sea or land, as he sees meet ; hath appeared signally in our behalf, guilty as we are. O how blind are those who do not see that the hand of God, and not superior seamanship, is the grand cause that fifteen sail of British ships should overcome the Spanish fleet, consisting of twenty-seven. Not only capturing two first-rates of one hundred and twelve guns each, and two others, one of eighty and one of seventy guns, but also greatly damaging several others ; and thereby preventing their junction with the French and Dutch fleets, who avowedly owned their design of invading our little island. O Lord, it is *thy doing*, and may well be wondrous in our eyes : therefore to thee be all the glory, to whom alone it is due.* Surely prayer has

* This brilliant victory was obtained under the command of Sir John Jervis, off Cape St. Vincent, on the 14th of the preceding month ; and

been heard. O may we all be thankful and humble! and do thou, O Lord, grant thy blessing, and hear the prayers offered up. Regard our late attempts to humble ourselves by confession on the last day set apart as a national fast of Scotland; and own a neighbouring nation, this day employed in the like solemn exercises. If possible, yet save us for thy name's sake. Great was also the goodness of our God in defeating the attempt of a descent upon Ireland some months ago; even after part of the enemy's forces were landed. He caused the wind to blow that scattered their fleet, and obliged them to return to port greatly damaged.* How wonderful is his goodness to his unworthy creatures! O let it prove salvation to us! Neither would we forget his recent appearance for us in Wales, when he caused twelve hundred troops, who had made good a landing on that coast, to lay down their arms, and surrender themselves as prisoners of war, when only opposed by the militia and the country people, rising in a mass against them. How easily, if not prevented by the God of battles, might the enemy have overcome. O Lord, may these memorable instances of thy goodness to us be written in indelible characters upon our hearts; and appear in our lives by universal obedience to thy commands. Without this thorough reformation, by the faith of the gospel, though the fatal blow may be suspended for a season, it must take place; and we may fear, with double severity, after having rendered ourselves doubly guilty by resisting every effort made for our deliverance.

April 14. Sabbath last, I was glad to go to the house of God

acquired for the British admiral the appropriate title of Earl of St. Vincent. *Baine's History of the War*, b. ii, ch. i, p. 181.

* This gracious interposition of Providence deserves to be farther noticed. "The republican government of France, perceiving a crisis in the situation of Ireland more favourable to the success of an invasion than any which had occurred since the French revolution, seized that occasion to strike a blow of no common importance. Fifteen thousand chosen troops, under the command of Hoche, were embarked at Brest, on the 15th December, 1796; intended to act on their arrival with a body of the disaffected Irish, who were known to be considerable in numbers, and organized for insurrection by chiefs of talents and intrepidity. Every thing being prepared, Admiral Villaret Joyeuse set sail from Brest with eighteen sail of the line, beside frigates and transports, while the general embarked with his staff on board the frigate *La Fraternité*. The wind at first was favourable; but scarcely had the expedition left the outer harbour, when a storm arose which dispersed the fleet, and separating the frigate which carried Hoche, obliged him to escape into the harbour of Rochelle, after weathering a dangerous cruise, and being chased by two British vessels. Of the whole fleet, only eight two-deckers reached the coast of Ireland, under Admiral Bouvet, who appeared off Bantry Bay, but was forced from that situation in a few days by tempestuous weather, and obliged to return to France without effecting a landing. In this disastrous expedition the French lost not less than three ships of the line and three frigates from the adverse elements."—*Baine's History of the War*, b. i, ch. xxii. p. 167.

in the morning, though my expectations were not fully answered. On coming home soon after, I went to prayer with a Christian friend, without any enlarged expectations. Yet my gracious God and Father broke into my soul in a wonderful manner; and so clearly appeared to the eye of faith, as seated on a throne of grace, willing to hear and help, as astonished me; and, if I may so express it, held out the sceptre of mercy, as a token of love and gracious acceptance, as King Ahasuerus did of old to Esther. This passage of Scripture immediately occurred to my mind; but O, how different the condescension: the latter was but an earthly monarch, though he reigned over twenty-seven provinces; the former, the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God. A solemn, deep, yet sweet sense of the divine presence penetrated my whole soul; and, through mercy I have never since lost the glorious view. O that it may prove transforming, and that I may be enabled to walk more humbly and closely with God than ever.

May 12. O God, how good, how strong art thou. On Thursday had a sweet season in secret prayer. Soon after, my soul was much blessed with the perusal of a Christian friend's letter, highly favoured of the Lord. Jehovah drew nigh, and my soul felt as if set on fire; not only in point of strong desire, but of enjoyment. It was a precious season. Soon after, when joining a few Christian friends in prayer, praise, and Christian conversation, I found the place rendered sacred by the divine presence; while my God set clearly before me that inward life the Christian is called to live by faith in Jesus, and gave me a rich taste of it. I felt sinking into Deity, losing myself in the ocean of divine love; while Jehovah seemed to fill all space. In the evening, when in secret before God, he again repeated his wonderful goodness; felt so near, so manifested his divine presence, as I can nowise express or explain. O Lord, grant great and permanent effects; let it not pass away unimproved, as too many of these wonderful and gracious manifestations have done; at least, not so much improved as they might have been, had I been more faithful. O Lord, I have daily cause of humiliation before thee; yet this does not prevent thy flow of mercy to me. How wonderful thy goodness, for Christ's sake, to thy poor dust and ashes. I would lie low before thee, and lament my unworthiness and unfaithfulness.

June 30. (Friday.) I have reason to bless the Lord for a sweet sense of his love shed abroad in my heart, with a deep, very deep consciousness of his goodness, both with respect to public and private affairs. Truly my meditations upon these doings of the Lord have been very comfortable. With respect to the former, I seem to have a sweet notice from on high, that public calamities have been retarded, our tranquillity lengthened, and many remarkable interpositions in behalf of our country

obtained, by the unceasing prayer that has for many months been ascending in the name of Jesus, in various places, and by every denomination of Christians. And it appears to me that while this spirit of prayer is continued, national judgments will be suspended. I feel, therefore, a dread, lest any of us should be less frequent or fervent at a throne of grace now, when public affairs wear a more pleasing aspect: may a gracious God prevent it. I believe also it is particularly pleasing to him that so many in different places, and in various situations in life, are stirring themselves up to spread the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus, both at home and abroad. O that this keen edge may never wear off, and that the Lord may countenance every attempt made agreeably to his will, for the conversion of sinners, and the building up of his saints.

July 21. (Friday.) These last eight days I have been much favoured with intense breathings after all the life of God; and tried with a keen sense of my weakness and inability to walk up to the light given. My heart almost breaketh for longings after what I do not attain. Help, Lord—how long: O let it suffice. The time is short. Give me all I desire: *all, all*, that is in thee; *all* that, as a creature, I can receive. The way is made plain; the promises are on my side; also the faithfulness of God. I enjoy many sweet and powerful manifestations of the love of the Father and the Son; but these cannot suffice. My God, undertake for me, level every mountain. I have long felt my own weakness; now let me prove thy mighty power made manifest in it, and thine shall be the glory. Since last date, I have had a kind of general notice on my mind, as if the Lord had more work for me, while my heart feels ardently desirous of being employed by him. I long for more active service, and plead and wish that he would raise up some to join me in it. Lord, let this light shine clearer, and make the impression deeper, if from thee.

August 11. (Friday.) Surely I am called to declare that God is love. Much of his goodness has passed before me since last date. Had, last Sabbath, an opportunity of remembering the dying love of Jesus, with power to make known all my wants at his table; though not such a rich enjoyment of divine things. On Monday the eternal world and its blessed inhabitants seemed nigh. I felt as if mingling with kindred spirits that had escaped from a land of misery to the abodes of bliss. In the evening found it good to meet with a select few, and join in prayer, praise, and Christian conference. Many are my opportunities: O that my progress bore any proportion. One evening, after the fatigue of much business, while in secret prayer, the Lord Jesus drew unexpectedly nigh; quick as lightning he touched my heart with the fire of his love. I very soon found it was preparatory to trials, from which I suffered keenly for some time. I cried

to my God to help, and lead into his will, which in mercy he soon did; pointed out my way, and gave power to walk in it, trusting in himself; rising above nature's false feelings, and victory quickly followed. A song of grateful praise was put into my mouth, and into the hearts of others particularly concerned in the final issue of the affair. O God, who is a God like unto thee! How often have I proved thee, in various kinds of straits, a present aid. Bless the Lord, O my soul. O that every instance of thy goodness may bring me nearer to thyself, and increase my conformity to the divine image.

October 20. (Friday.) My comforts have not been so strong these some days past, though still a measure of the divine manifestation, with which I was favoured some weeks ago, remains; with a small renewal of it at times. My soul has mourned after greater nearness to my God. I felt as if I could not live without it. My feelings were something similar to what the poet expresses of "tears that delight, and sighs that waft to heaven," for I experienced an increase of divine love while thus exercised. But, alas! it is but a drop, compared with that fulness promised by a faithful God. O Lord, remove every hinderance, and let me prove this fulness for thy name's sake. Teach me how to improve thy goodness; yea, thy every dispensation, both of grace and providence. Yesterday was a time of trial in the morning, but soon after my God wonderfully turned my captivity: heard prayer, and came down to my help; we all felt his blessed presence, and made mention of his loving kindness. I felt astonished at his goodness and power. O how soon can he turn mourning into joy.

Words fail to say what my feelings have been these days past, on account of the wonderful interposition of a God of love as to public affairs; just when we seemed on the brink of destruction as an island. O how dark the political horizon appeared, from the recent events that had taken place in Paris; and from the sailing of the Dutch fleet (so long blocked up in their harbour, by the vigilance of Admiral Duncan) to join the formidable armament at Brest. It was believed a determined design to invade Great Britain or Ireland, and most likely both. At this *critical* moment our almighty Preserver appeared in our behalf, and delivered into our hands, after a desperate engagement, nine or ten of the Dutch ships, including two flag ships, with both admirals. Lord, how great is thy mercy! How great is thy power, for it is *thy doings*; therefore *to thee* be all the glory. O write it deep on every British heart, "it is the doing of the Lord;" and teach all of us to render the thanks and praise that are due. O that thy goodness would lead us as a people to repentance. O God, give thy blessing with this signal deliverance, that we may yet be preserved, and made a holy and a happy people. I never felt more jealous for the glory of my God than

on this signal occasion, lest we should not see, and that eminently, *his hand* in this great business; lest we should give that praise to men (who are but his instruments) which is due to the Lord alone. Surely he is the Hearer of prayer. None, O Lord, cry to thee in vain that cry aright. Blessed God, *maintain* what thou hast wrought for us.*

November 3. (Friday.) The tide of spiritual temptation has run high these eight days. My conflicts with the powers of darkness strong; yet have felt support and, at times, comfort: a struggling into God; a wrestling spirit for every purchased blessing: especially sanctification, with the *seal* of the Holy Spirit. Without *this*, I find the power of painful temptation soon dims the evidence that arises from the *fruit* of the Spirit. I have felt powerfully drawn to a throne of grace these days past; yet, when there, had the mortification to find all my kindling ardours die away; notwithstanding, I have sensibly experienced an increase of the love of God. He certainly, in some small degree, is *my God and my all*. But O, having tasted of his love, I cannot rest till I am lost in *him*; filled with all his promised fulness. I burn with desire to glorify him; and feel at the same time such an inability, such a piercing sense of my nothingness, as I can nowise express. O my God, when wilt thou satiate my weary soul: when wilt thou replenish my sorrowful heart: hasten the long wished-for period.

Of late I have felt the most ardent desire to exalt the Lord Jesus Christ. With what delight do I confess and firmly believe him the Son of God, *equal with the Father*; yea, *God over all, blessed for evermore*—KING of ZION—also the *compassionate High Priest* over the house of God. This in nothing derogates from the dignity of his kingly office. I lament the *awful heresy* of the day, and truly pity the *authors* and *abettors* of it. The former goes to rob Christ of all his glory, and to reduce him to a level with the creatures that were created by him; *for he created all things*: the latter, to the utmost of their limited power, build and support this wretched system of doctrine; and, by every possible means, disseminate their destructive principles. But the *baseless fabric* cannot stand, it must tumble down. "The heathen may rage, and the people imagine a vain thing: kings and rulers may take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his Anointed: but he that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall have them in derision." Pity them, O my God, in time; that they may not be miserable through eternity.

* This action, which was gallantly contested by the principal part of the enemy's fleet, proved one of the most brilliant and decisive engagements recorded in our naval annals. It was fought between Camperdown and Egmont, the land being about nine miles to the leeward, October 11th, of this year.—*Baine's History*, &c., b. ii, ch. i, p. 182.

TO MRS. JOHNSON.

August 24, 1797.

Although the letters in general of my friend in the Lord are made spirit and life to my soul, still I am generally, by one circumstance or another, prevented answering so soon as I could wish, even for my own sake. Every morning I plead with my God to fit me for what he may call me to in the course of the day. If to write, that he may guide my pen; if to speak, that he may put his words in my mouth; if to act, that he may give that wisdom which cometh down from above: in hopes of the answer, I wish, I look that the Hearer of prayer may lead to some profitable matter. At this time I praise him for his goodness to you; and it is also matter of great thankfulness I have to praise him for his goodness to myself, in public, in private, and in secret. Truly I may say, "GOD IS LOVE." How condescending! How low does he stoop to his dust and ashes! He makes me rejoice. The Lord is King, and the King is now my Friend. How endearing, how delightful my fellowship with Deity since I last wrote, eternity alone can say! And yet, O how far short of my vast, yea, unbounded desires. Great is my encouragement to press on, from Him who delights to do his needy creatures good. Conscious of my many wants, I often, especially when with a few of his children for the purpose of social prayer, praise, and Christian conference, call upon my God to draw nigh and bless us: Jehovah instantly appears, and so penetrates me with a deep sense of his presence as I would in vain attempt to express; but all present confess, "God is here." The adversary, before these precious seasons, tries every method to harass me, and to stop my mouth, by confusing my ideas. I feel such sterility of thought, such barrenness of expression, as is for the time truly trying: but He whom men and devils must obey, soon commands him hence; and then the reign of light, life, love, and liberty takes place, and I sink sweetly into God. Nor is it a solitary blessing: while the words he gives are spoken in simplicity, all *feel* and all *praise*.

Self-emptying work still goes forward, as preparatory, I trust, to larger incomes than ever. I *see* and *feel* my own unworthiness in a way I cannot express; but as my friend well understands from her own experience. I literally find that I can do nothing, to any purpose, without continual assistance from *Him* who giveth willingly. This has led me into such an habitual looking up for help as enables me in some sort to go forward, in whatever I am called to; though not always so as to please myself.

"O that all the art might know
Of living thus to thee!
Find their heaven begun below,
And here thy glory see;

Walk in all the works prepared
By thee to exercise their grace ;
Till they gain their full reward,
And see thy glorious face !"

These words of one of our hymns struck me forcibly a few days ago, when called to speak of the Lord's dealings with my soul : and feeling rather a degree of embarrassment, from the temptations above mentioned, they seemed so immediately given, and so expressed the language of my heart, as filled me with gratitude, and set my lips at liberty. How am I blessed, and yet how unworthy. O my God, how undeserving of thy notice. O help me to glorify and enjoy thee to the *utmost*. This is all I live for.

I think, if my heart does not deceive me, my general manner of life is a walking in the *simplicity* of *faith* : yet with the conscious dignity of a soul closely united to Deity, that would grasp infinity itself. Though I am willing to be the servant of all, to their edification, I cannot stoop to the trifles of life, which appear to many so important ; neither to give *much* of my time to the creature. Having God, a little of them goes a great way.

You feel your God is *your all*—to direct, comfort, and instruct still farther in the deep things of Deity ; to enlarge your powers of reception, that you may sink still deeper in the boundless ocean of his pure love ; till all you are is lost in him, and he is all your own. What endless cause of praise ! Yet how feeble is our humanity ! How many the weaknesses, less or more, inseparably connected with growing years. To bear them with patience, and Christian fortitude and dignity, and so as to glorify the Giver of all our mercies, is most desirable. The enemy tempts me, at times, to look forward a few years ; and insinuates, if I should see them, what weaknesses I may then experience ; but I cast him and these thoughts behind, and leave all to my God, who has cared for me hitherto, and will to the end. I have thought of late that he has more work for me, but as yet I do not see where, or how ; this also I leave with him. As an island, still we are spared ; how wonderful ! His goodness in this respect deeply affects me.

Is there any prospect of primitive Christianity being revived in your city ? A spirit of love, I understand, has prevailed in the conference. God is with us here ; though we have not any remarkable ingathering of souls. Your heart, I hope, will never be estranged from that beloved connection. I would write to Miss Ritchie, but know not where to find her. A keen edge is upon the spirit of many in Scotland, which leads to many laudable attempts to spread the knowledge of the truth, at home and abroad. Since the departure of my two valuable friends, I have stood much alone ; none comes to my help, either to assist with purse or counsel. Lately, I have wished that the Lord would bring

forward some able and willing. I am much tried with the embarrassed state of Lady Glenorchy's funds; more especially as there is no surplus of my own; while opportunities of various kinds are daily occurring for active service, and my heart is keenly set for usefulness; but this also I must leave with God. Help me by your prayers; and believe me, with Christian regard,
 Your poor fellow pilgrim, D. MAXWELL.

TO MISS RITCHIE.

September 5, 1797.

It has long been upon my mind to answer dear Miss Ritchie's profitable letter, received several months ago. She will, through the influence of that love which hopeth all things, forgive my seeming neglect, and accept a few lines written in the Christian spirit; and, in some degree, under a sweet gale of heavenly and divine love. Of late I have, through undeserved mercy, been much favoured with close and delightful fellowship with the Father and the Son. O how does this dignify human nature; I must also say, how does it humble it, even to the dust. What a word of consolation, pure and indescribable, springs from this sacred fountain; ever full, yet ever flowing. And how simple the mode of conveyance, *by faith*. This is, indeed, a wonder-working principle, as one justly terms it. I shall bless my God, through all the unwasting ages of eternity, for the many useful lessons he has taught me respecting it, and still continues to teach me, and bears with my slowness in learning and practising them. O, who is a God like unto our God? I hope I may venture to say he is my God and my all; who performeth all things for me.

"Far above all earthly things,
 While yet my hands are here employ'd,
 Sees my soul the King of kings,
 And freely talks with God."

Amazing privilege: "Lord what is man, that thou dost thus visit him." I have but a taste, compared with what is purchased, and what I may be enabled to receive.

I bless the Lord he daily sets before me the glorious prize; *all the communicable fulness of Deity*. The door stands open: he kindly invites me to come forward; and gives for my encouragement a *sweet taste*, which the poverty of human language prevents my explaining. At a prayer meeting, about two or three weeks ago, my God gave me a rich display of his mercy. God the Father and Son broke in with sweet surprise upon my soul. He has given many powerful renewals of it since; and though not always with the same degree of joy, it has abode with me to the present moment. For some considerable time past, in our little class meeting in my own house, we have been

most uncommonly favoured with the divine presence. Jehovah comes down, and consecrates the place by his presence : and we are all constrained to confess a present God. He overshadows me, and fills with such a deep, holy, reverential awe, sweetly tempered with love, as I cannot explain. I sensibly feel that I speak under a sacred unction which reaches the hearts of others, and so affects my own that it seems as if the curtains of mortality were drawn aside, and heaven opened to our view. They are indeed precious seasons. O that we may be enabled to improve them to the uttermost.

I praise my God, who still keeps me poor in spirit; truly sensible of my shortcomings; yet constantly thirsting after the full enjoyment of every purchased blessing, and surrounded with the presence of the first person of the glorious Trinity. How wonderful his condescension! For still I find my fellowship and intercourse are more constantly with the Father than with the Son; sometimes with both. And still I find communion with Jehovah attended with a much larger measure of holy, solemn, reverential awe than with the Son. A peculiar degree of inexpressible sweetness attends the latter. I feel that I every moment want the merit of his blood, and every moment enjoy it: blessed Jesus, how infinite my obligations to thee!

I feel at times shy to write or speak of the deep things of God! lest my testimony should not be received, or not understood; or lest any should suppose I have more grace than I really have. But I feel this inward life is so powerfully maintained while I testify of it, that I cannot be altogether silent; though I do not often either write or speak fully of it. Let us press on to the heights and depths of redeeming love: and assist each other by prayer, &c., as our Lord shall direct. Our new preachers this year have been ushered into their appointment in this circuit with many tokens for good. Wishing Miss Ritchie every blessing purchased for her, I am, in gospel bonds, her friend and fellow pilgrim,

D. MAXWELL.

CHAPTER XXXIII.—1798.

Diary and correspondence continued.

January 5. In the beginning of this year, as usual, I renewed my engagement to be the Lord's, and *only* for him, with all I have, and am, or ever shall have. Lord, ratify the deed, and accept the poor gift of a poor worm, because offered upon that altar that sanctifies the gift. The day following, when at a throne of grace, and when beginning to ask the life of one of his ministers, Jehovah poured a spirit of prayer upon me; gave me a sensible manifestation of his love and increase of fellowship;

with much liberty to pray for the spiritual prosperity of his servant, but little freedom to ask for his life. I seemed to meet his spirit at a throne of grace, as full of joyous sensations before his God, and gratitude to me, for the interest taken in his welfare. I have hardly once bowed a knee in prayer since, without a repetition of this: nor ever lifted up my heart to the Lord, whether alone or with others, but instantly my friend joined me in spirit; when even his countenance appeared to the eye of my mind as full of heavenly joy. This being rather a new thing to me, I feel unable to decide upon it, and what to think of it I know not; therefore, only simply state the matter of fact. It is possible, in the course of providence, I may hear of something that will prove explanatory. I praise my God, who so blessed my own soul in my attempt to help a precious fellow creature; and still helps me to hold fast the blessing. This requires no explanation, being no unusual thing. O for gratitude.

February 2. (Friday.) Surely my God hath heard, pitied, and helped *me* since last Friday. The latter part of *that day* the Lord was good, and when tried unexpectedly appeared in my behalf. He took hold as it were of my heart, and prevented any painful feeling; and filled me with a strong hope that he would undertake my cause, in one way or another; so that I remained unmoved, though appearances were much against attaining the object I had in view. But if the Lord says, "Fear not," "faith laughs at impossibilities, and cries, It shall be done." Though not as yet done, still my trust is in *Him* who never fails to fulfil the hopes *himself* hath given. The following day also, especially in the evening, the Lord felt graciously near, and my hope strong. On the Monday, likewise, I had reason to praise him; when reading of the Lord Jesus, he suddenly drew nigh, wonderfully clear to the eye of faith; and very soon after, in secret prayer, gave me a delightful view of the sacred Trinity, of the personality of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; of their equality in power and glory, and sameness of substance. On Thursday, in secret prayer, he gave me sweet access to a throne of grace. I have since been tried with the distress and danger of one nearly allied by the ties of nature; for whom much prayer has ascended for his life, but more especially for the life of his soul. Hear, Lord, and answer the many petitions offered up for our poor guilty country; and, if possible, spare us yet. I bless the Lord for the privilege of secret prayer. What a source of comfort and profit to one's own soul, and that of others. Here we are permitted to pour out our souls, when grief assails, when danger is nigh, or apprehended to be so; when difficulties increase, and close and variegated trials press the spirits down; and in all these cases find help, less or more, sooner or later, as our compassionate God and Saviour sees best.

March 23. (Friday.) Since last date I have had some sweet

and profitable times. On Monday evening, at the prayer meeting, the Lord was present to bless and do us good. Through mercy I obtained an answer, in a measure, to a petition frequently put up of late respecting that meeting : O that it may be fully answered. A fresh flame of strong desire seemed kindled in my soul, for the *full* possession of the *fullest* salvation of God. O how I longed to plunge into the Godhead's deepest sea of holy, pure, perfect love. I felt all on fire to be lost in the immensity of Deity. Since then have been much drawn out in secret prayer to plead for it ; and have been favoured with such enlarged desires, such expanded, glorious views of it, as brought a present heaven into my soul. The language of my heart was, and is,

“ Sink me to perfection's height,
The depth of humble love : ”

this, not as a glorious acquisition to aggrandize, and bring much respect and admiration to *self* from surrounding creatures, or self-approbation ; but as the accomplishment of the gospel promises to help me more to glorify God. These are scattered richly through the New Testament : such as First Corinthians, chapter xiii, from the 4th verse to the end ; also, Ephesians, chapter iii, from the 6th verse to the end ; also, Second Thessalonians, chapter v, from the 16th verse to the 24th inclusive. Though most of these are rather in the language of prayer and exhortation than promises, yet it alters not the case, as we are morally certain the apostle would neither have exhorted those to whom he wrote to do these things, nor have prayed for them himself, if they were not to be obtained. Nay, he expressly says, at the 24th verse of the last reference : “ *Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.* ” What will he do ? He will sanctify wholly ; he will fill with that perfect love that casteth out all fear. And all this will sink the creature to the dust, *feeling* as well as *seeing*, we are nothing, and that Christ is *all in all*. None prize a Saviour as do these humble souls ; they feel they can do nothing without him,

“ Weaker than a bruised reed,
Help they every moment need. ”

They are taught to live every moment by *faith* upon him ; not as an abstracted speculative principle, but by a *faith that brings deep peace and present power*. O my God, let me, for thy name's sake, enjoy much of this full salvation, that stands so closely connected with poverty of spirit ; with humble love, that gives the glory of all to thee.

After this long digression, I go on to say : On Tuesday morning, I had a delightful time in secret, from the views given me of the great things Christ has purchased for his people ; and freely bestows on those who, Abrahamlike, stagger not at the promises through unbelief, but become strong in faith, and thus

receive their accomplishment. I prove the great utility of living by simple faith, even in my small measure. It brings the soul to a throne of grace, as a child to an indulgent parent: not with a price in hand, but pleading *only* its own necessities—and to insure a supply, the *merits of Jesus*; who, by his meritorious sufferings, has purchased every blessing his people can want; well aware that this alone can turn the scale in its favour. Lord, increase my faith, that I may glorify thee by receiving all thou waitest to give. On Thursday the Lord was present to teach and comfort us, when met for the purpose of praise, prayer, and Christian conference, as those of old; and at night, in secret prayer, I was enabled to plead for more grace, deeply conscious of my shortcomings, and saw both the willingness of my God to bestow, and the value of the blessings I asked. Lord, answer speedily. Have still been enabled to retain a measure of the blessing bestowed at the Lord's supper, as formerly mentioned. Yet I have been of late much and variously exercised in mind on many accounts; and have had some severe trials to encounter: yet, if competent to judge, I feel more desirous of power to glorify my gracious God, by living in his will, than to be delivered from them. He knows what is best for me, and has ever been good to me in all his dispensations; therefore, I still endeavour in all to say, "Thy will be done;" and also in all to trust in him. I do find it good so to do; though yet many petitions, frequently and fervently put up, remain unanswered.

April 6. (Friday.) Still I walk in darkness, and have no light in point of providential dispensations; but this I must qualify so far as to say it is only as to particulars. The Lord has, I think, given reason to believe, in general, judgments will overtake our guilty land: but as to the precise time, the manner, the weight, the duration, I am altogether ignorant. How far either church or state will be affected by them, I know not; or what the final result will be, *except that they will be followed by great days of the gospel*.* O God, thou art a God of mercy! Judgment is thy strange work; therefore I look up to thee. I can trust in thee in the time of trouble: thou hast given me good cause so to do. Yet, Lord, my heart trembles within me, and I am afraid of thy *just judgments*. *Just* they will be, come when they will. My inmost soul keenly feels the wonderful length and depth of thy mercy in sparing me so long. O that it may be sanctified to saints and sinners.†

* This seems almost prophetic. Thank God, we live to see those days. "O Jesus, ride on till all be subdued."

† These were not the apprehensions of a weak and timorous mind. Such was the general alarm, that the voluntary contributions for the support of the British government against the threatened French invasion, amounted this year to upward of two millions and a half sterling, beside £139,332 15s. 2d. remitted from British residents at Bengal.—Vide *Aspin's Ana. of Universal History*, vol. i, p. 169.

With respect to the state of my own mind these eight days, I have had no very remarkable manifestations of divine love, or visitations of severe trial. I have experienced sweet renewals of the blessing bestowed some weeks ago, at a sacramental occasion; some comfortable seasons at a throne of grace, in secret; and found that *simple faith* in Jesus, in time of trial, with prayer, has power with God. I have for many years viewed it my chief end to glorify God, and proved it my chief happiness to enjoy him. These views, of late, seem to grow brighter and more impressive: the will of God more precious. I seem to sink deeper into it; am made willing to embrace it more uniformly and more universally than ever. I feel not only *unwilling* to choose for myself, but quite inadequate to the task of deciding what is best, and, therefore, esteem it a great privilege to have my God to choose for me in all things. Blessed Lord, carry forward thy work in me with a more marked progress. All my soul cries out for this: and all the powers of darkness unite to prevent it: but the God of salvation is above them all.

May 12. (Friday.) Still my God is doing his needy creature good. In the course of these last eight days I have been favoured with many opportunities of entering the house of the Lord: during the dispensation of the word and sacrament in Edinburgh and its vicinity. On the *last day* I looked and prayed for a spirit of holy mourning for myself and others: but my God gave me much sweet enjoyment of himself during a discourse from, "Draw nigh unto God, and he will draw nigh unto you." I felt sinking into Jehovah,—losing myself in him; in the possession of holy, solemn, sweet fellowship with Deity. O the wonderful condescension of the Most High, *for his Son's sake!* *This is the meritorious cause* of all our mercies. Eternal praise unto him as the great source of all present blessings and future prospects. On the great day of the feast my heart was greatly lifted up in the ways of the Lord, and my hands made strong by the mighty God of Jacob. I felt surrounded with such an irresistible flood of meridian evidence for eternal happiness as was pleasing to experience; yet felt a holy shame: deeply conscious how unworthy I was of it. O that my God may be glorified in every instance of his goodness to his poor creature, by giving me to feel much of its transforming influence. For a day or two after my happiness did not increase. I was rather called to listen to divine teaching respecting greater victories over *self*, and more frequent and fervent addresses at a throne of grace. The former was attained; the latter, I trust, will also be bestowed. During several days of last week the love of Jesus burned in my heart with a strong flame. I felt very zealous for, and jealous lest any should successfully attempt to rob him of any part of his glory, as *Son of, and equal to, God the Father*. My heart revolted with a holy indignation at every attempt so inju-

rious and vain : yet not so as to exclude prayer for such daring sinners. On Thursday my gracious God was sensibly present, with a few select ones, met for praise, prayer, and Christian converse. It felt a sacred hour. Truly it is often good for me and some others on these occasions to draw nigh unto God. This morning, agreeably to instruction from on high, *self* was conquered ; yet, at secret prayer, I did not feel all that access I wished, neither that for which I looked ; yet possessed much desire for both. Soon after, in pleading with the Lord for three important things in particular, and entreating for an answer, I seemed to obtain it for two of them, in these words : " And ye shall serve the Lord your God, and he shall bless thy bread and thy water : " and much comfort respecting the third, from part of the 36th and 37th chapters of Isaiah, where Hezekiah cries to the Lord against the insults of the enemies of the Lord, and the threatened invasion of his lands by the king of Assyria, and by his general, Rabshakeh. Twice Isaiah was commissioned by the Lord to deliver most comfortable answers to his requests. I would lie low before the Lord on account of his goodness and my own unworthiness. He gave me much comfort this day also from these words : " Call upon me and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things which thou knowest not : " also, " Behold, I will bring health and a cure ; and I will cure them, and will reveal unto them the abundance of peace and truth : " also, " Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will perform that good thing which I have promised unto the house of Israel, and to the house of Judah. " Amen ; even so be it, as thou hast spoken unto thy dust and ashes.

— 18. (Friday.) Still, through the tender mercies of my God, I have to record fresh proofs of his goodness, since the 12th instant. On Tuesday last, when hearing my week-day school examined, (for the purpose of dismissing, with a Bible, and with prayer, praise, and much exhortation, nineteen scholars, fully taught, beside two more of one year's standing only, *now* put into the Orphan Hospital,) I felt very languid ; but on lifting up my request to the Hearer of prayer, that he would give me the souls of all the young ones present (forty-nine) for my hire, my God drew nigh, *very nigh*, and I felt filled with a reverential awe : a heaven of silent, holy love overspread my whole soul. Indescribable serenity, a deep, sweet sense of the divine presence pierced my heart. O that my request may be given me. In the evening Jehovah again broke in with holy, sweet surprise, upon my whole soul, (though not engaged in any devotional exercise,) with all his softening power, and my heart felt filled with heavenly tenderness : yea, all dissolved in love. O, what must the *full fruition of Deity* above be, when here below a drop, a *degree* of nearness, so captivates the soul : so arrests

every power of the mind, that faith seems lost in enjoyment! Blessed Lord, enlarge my capacity, and fill me with thy fullness.

August 24. (Friday.) I have many mercies and privileges to acknowledge. The communion of particular saints has been sweet; and of others, I trust, profitable; as it led to much, very much prayer; but still they are not my God. O how empty would every privilege be without his *divine presence*! *this* increases, greatly increases every temporal and spiritual privilege in point of enjoyment. The full fruition of Deity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, ONE GOD, alone can satisfy the vast desires of my soul. This includes *conformity* and *continual fellowship*; and I believe the latter is in exact proportion to the former. In the nature of things it must be so. My soul pants after holiness on this account. O let the almighty fiat go forth! My God has so formed my spirit that I cannot be happy but in *himself*. Mistress of the whole universe, what a poor, empty, miserable creature should I be! What an aching void should I feel without him! Come, then, my God, fulfil my large desires, large as infinity. Give all my Jesus hath purchased: with not only inclination, but power, to lay it out all for thee.

October 26. (Friday.) Since last Friday I have been confined to the house, but yesterday I went abroad, and felt my Lord nigh, and his love increased in my soul: had also a sweet time in secret in the morning; and at noon also, when with two of his ministering servants: they also were comforted. I have found my absence from the house of God painful, though at times have felt holy, sweet nearness to him. *This* is my element. But O, who that has tasted of this exquisite enjoyment but must pant for more. Surely this is congenial to the new creature, to the heaven-born soul: but the blessing of *desire*, even the most intense, is far short of *possession*. Come, then, O my God, and every moment fill my soul with thy pure love; encompass with thy presence; encircle in thy divine arms. O what is all the world calls great or good, what is all terrestrial happiness, when compared with the pure, the perfect love of God, that casteth out fear; that, as it were, annihilates self. Then the soul feels lost in God,—blessed with inexpressible nearness to Jehovah, through the only medium, the Lord Jesus Christ. I have but *tasted* of this; yet, blessed be God for a *taste*, which I trust is a prelude to the full enjoyment. At times, in the course of these eight days, the cup has felt bitter; yet, I think the bitterest ingredient was feeling, to my own apprehension, a want of power to glorify my God in the fires, as I wished. His will is very precious, and my feelings very quick; the smallest deviation pains acutely.

O the height and depth of divine mercy to our guilty land! The poverty of human language prevents expressing what I

feel, and what others should feel, on the present occasion. Just before the Brest fleet got to the Irish shore, with about 6,000 troops, arms, ammunition, stores, clothing, and much money, to join the Irish rebels, our God interposed, and gave the whole into our hands, by Sir John Borlase Warren. Lord, to thee all glory is due! Incline all to give it.*

Dec. 28. (Friday.) The cup of blessing I have in a delightful degree been permitted to drink of since the 21st. My obligations to a God of love greatly increase: yet still I thirst for more. My desires are insatiable after the chief good. O, who that loves his God, can love enough? I feel much holy shame that I come so far behind. I loathe myself, and into nothing fall, when thus highly favoured from on high. These days past, especially at times, my nearness to Deity I cannot express. One of these precious seasons I enjoyed yesterday, when employed as I generally am on that day. Such an astonishing realizing of the divine presence, Father and Son, as made me amazed that *faith itself* could make so manifest those great realities to the eye of the mind. Human language can in no way express what the soul enjoys on these memorable occasions. Yet I am well aware that it is not the *mere enjoyment*, however *exquisite*, which ascertains their value, but their *transforming influence*. For this I plead with the Hearer of prayer. O that I may prevail to the utmost! then his great name shall be glorified, and my soul eternally profited; and perhaps some of my fellow sinners or saints also; for all things are possible with the Almighty. On Monday evening, in public, the divine arm was made bare in my behalf, both as to additional strength and comfort, and I clearly saw to whom I was indebted. On Tuesday morning, and this day early, I was highly favoured in secret prayer, with sweet access; much liberty in pleading for all I wanted, and with soul-animating hopes of success. The word of God was indeed made food to me, especially particular promises. O what thanks are due! But no degree of grace will

* "This victory was highly important in its consequences, as it led to the final termination of the Irish rebellion—a rebellion bloody and abhorrent, and which had continued to rage with unrelenting fury for three months, in which more than thirty thousand lives were sacrificed, and property to the amount of upward of two millions sterling destroyed; and which, after throwing the whole kingdom into indescribable confusion and dismay, overwhelmed the instigators in one common ruin. That the object of this deep-laid and extensive conspiracy was to imitate the example set by the people of Holland, and to erect Ireland into a republic, through the agency of France, cannot be doubted; and had the French directory manifested as much promptitude in executing, as the original conspirators displayed ability in forming their plans, this revolutionary struggle might have ended in a measure which can never be sufficiently deprecated; not only as tending to the alienation of a large portion of the strength of the empire, but as an event involving its prosperity and independence."—*Bainé's History*, b. ii, ch. ix, p. 249.

secure from temptation. I had soon after an attack from the wicked one. How soon should I be conquered, but for divine strength exerted in my weakness. My God has, indeed, answered my request for a blessing in the close of the year. May he still do greater things before it ends, and increase them as soon as 1799 begins, and fully substantiate the hope he has given, and all the praise shall be his.

TO MRS. JOHNSON.

May 31, 1798.

I bless the Lord, who put it into the heart of my respected friend in Jesus, to send me a few lines, which came to hand only yesterday, though under date of May 19. This morning I sensibly met your spirit at a throne of grace, and seemed sweetly to unite in worshipping the sacred Three. Perhaps your God will yet spare you a little longer for his church's sake. But why should I wish to detain you longer from entering into the joy of your Lord? He makes you feel that though the earthly house fails, the immortal part waxes stronger and stronger. All shrinking will, I doubt not, be done away. It is owing to the weakness of the human frame; while the soul mounts up, as on eagles' wings, to see and meet its Lord, and many kindred souls gone before. O glorious day! I trust, through superabounding grace, to join you. What extremes now meet in your situation! feeble and weak, yet the joy of the Lord your strength. He feeds the flame that shall never be extinguished: it shall burn brighter and brighter, till it mingles with the blaze of eternal day; when you shall sink into Deity,—be lost and swallowed up in holy love, wonder, and praise. Your intense desire for a triumphant exit will surely be answered for the comfort and encouragement of those left behind.

My God is still doing his needy creature good. Since my last I have been favoured with divine teaching, and with such intimate nearness to Jehovah as no language can express. It truly lays and keeps me in the dust. I loathe myself; in short, I find silence must convey my feelings on this part of my subject, for words cannot. But my friend knows what I would say from her own knowledge of this part of Christian experience. I do find I would be the servant of all: but am unworthy of the ground on which I tread. I *feel* the universality of the fall: yet, astonishing, I am raised up, for Christ's sake, to union with Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Jehovah teaches and enables me to pass through Jesus as the way to himself; and there I rest as in my centre; and the deeper I sink *here* the less I appear in my own eyes, and prove extremes united. At times there are such views given of those great realities, only seen by faith, as must remain untold; but they grow more impressive, and cause my heart to burn with holy, intense desire to possess the fulness

of God. I cannot rest in any thing as yet bestowed. It seems but a taste. In the select society, O how does Jehovah break in upon my soul; and our class is more than ever owned and favoured with the sacred presence. All glory to Him to whom alone it belongs. I am ashamed to say so much; you will not mistake me. But this letter is by far too tedious for your weak frame: yet must farther say, the goodness of my God to our guilty land so overpowers my frame as I cannot express. I seem to feel the sins of all, and blush and grieve for them before a God of love.

Peace, love, joy, and abounding grace be with my friend on earth, and, at last, a joyous entrance into glory be ministered unto her happy spirit, prays her fellow pilgrim in the Lord Jesus,

D. M.

P. S. If strength be given to send another line, it will be a particular favour. If not, from one of your meeting. Farewell!

D. MAXWELL.

TO MRS. JOHNSON.

July 11, 1798.

My much respected and highly favoured friend's letter afforded sacred satisfaction. We would join in calling upon our souls, and all that is within us, to magnify and bless the God of grace and consolation, for his gracious dealings with his people in general, and with us in particular. But O,

"What angel tongue can tell,
His love immense, unsearchable?"

We have tasted of it, blessed be his name; and through mercy are hastening to the full enjoyment: the Lord enlarge our receptive powers, widen our capacities, and fill us full; not merely for our own happiness, but that we may glorify him to the utmost while on earth, and be thus fitted for the fullest enjoyment of Deity in eternity. My soul burns daily with increasing desire to glorify my God; to sink into him, and live in his will. I see this as affording the most exquisitely pure enjoyment, even in this world, where we are surrounded with innumerable weaknesses, necessarily connected with our fallen natures. What must it be above, when all these are done away? when that which is *perfect* is come? We are lost in the inquiry! Sweet, inexpressibly so, have been my spiritual enjoyments since I last wrote. I seem to get nearer to Jehovah; and with that, such opening rays of glory—such views as I can nowise express or explain! O, how does he bear with me! And, when I plead for his immediate presence, especially with one or more persons that I wish to profit, he condescends instantly to draw near. Of late I have been more highly favoured in this way than those with me.

We have had a Mr. S., of C., fellow of the college, (a most approved clergyman, and heavenly devoted soul,) preaching here for some weeks to crowded audiences. In all my interviews with him, whether alone or with others, more especially the former, my mouth hath been wonderfully opened to speak of the deep things of God : while the Most High witnessed to the truth, by his presence with both of us ; and my heart, from sweet experience, corroborated the evidence. I do not know that I ever met with one, except among the Methodists, that received with such evident delight what I said on the subject ; or with whom I found equal liberty. At times his heart seemed all on fire to seize the perfect bliss, with much present enjoyment ; at others he was dissolved in tears, feeling his poverty and unworthiness. I would hope the Lord is to do great things for and by him.

With all this goodness shown me, I am kept little and mean in my own eyes ; made deeply sensible of many weaknesses ; of my utter unworthiness ; so as to stand astonished that a holy God can love me, or even bear with me : but am, with my friend, taught to keep these things mostly to myself, well knowing they would be perhaps hurtful to others ; yea, a stumbling.

Your obligations are great indeed : a patient bearing in silence your infirmities will bring glory to your God, add to the triumph of grace *here*, and to the enhancement of glory *hereafter*. Am refreshed with the accounts of your aged friend, and would press after her. You will yet triumph more. There is a glorious work going on. Farewell, highly favoured soul. Through abounding grace I hope to meet you in glory ! till then, let us help each other, and press through and over every seeming hinderance. Help, O our God, and thine shall be the glory, willingly ascribed by D. M., and E. J., for ever.

D. MAXWELL.

CHAPTER XXXIV.—1799.

Diary and correspondence continued.

April 5. Through mercy I still live, and am able to testify of the great goodness of my God and Saviour. On Sabbath morning, the 31st of March, soon after public worship began, especially during the first prayer, I felt much engaged with the Lord. My whole soul flowed out in strong desire for some peculiar blessing, of which I stood much in need. While the speaker expounded from the first five verses of the second chapter of Revelation, especially the fourth verse, where the Lord Jesus, after mentioning his knowledge and approbation of what was

still good in the church of Ephesus, charges them with having *left their first love* ; I felt involuntarily led to examine myself on this head, as in the presence of God, and thought I found some reason to conclude I had not. Yet, fearing to trust my own conclusions in such an important matter, I begged the Lord to let me know, from *himself*, how that solemn business stood. In a moment or two, these words seemed spoken to *my heart*, by the Lord Jesus :—" O woman, greatly beloved, fear not." Dreading delusion, I feared to receive them, but still they were repeated again and again, with such power, and accompanied with so much love, I durst not reject them. With them I seemed also to obtain such an additional *hold of Jesus*, as I can by no means express. Many powerful renewals of this gracious visit I was favoured with, through that and the following day, and with each a heaven of love filled my heart, and, I trust, was not unfelt : especially on Monday evening, I was lost in wonder, love, and astonishment, that the adorable Saviour should so condescend to a poor unworthy creature. It is mystery all ! O who can fathom the depth of redeeming love ! Almost every day this week I have proved some of his goodness. O that it may be permanent, and, by sovereign aid, purifying ! and also a continual stimulus to activity and zeal in the cause and ways of my God. I see, I feel, how short I am ; but in a moment he can work a great work. Come, Lord Jesus, and lay every aspiring mountain low ; and reign the Lord of every motion of my heart. How willingly shall I obey.

May 24. I feel more of a spirit of prayer : I see more of the loveliness of Jesus ; of his immense value ; of the heaven there is in his love. Had I ten thousand worlds, how willingly would I give them all to feel my *heart brimful* of his pure love ; to have him reigning in it ; occupying all space ; bringing every thought into captivity to himself. Surely, Lord, these insatiable desires must be from on high. Wilt not thou, then, fulfil them ? Come, O my God, and not only do *this*, but " do exceedingly above all I can *ask or think* : " for how limited my petitions—how scanty my thoughts ! Since the 17th my comforts have not been so rich and strong as often they are ; yet have cause to be thankful for many mercies. On Monday evening, at the prayer meeting, the Lord seemed to shine on his work in my soul, so as to cause me to think he had done more for me than of which I am always sensible. It is only in his light we can see and know the things freely given us of him. On Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, he gave me repeated opportunities for the spiritual benefit of my fellow creatures, especially in the higher walks of life. I omitted last week mentioning a large opportunity given me, that occurs *only annually* : the examination of my week-day school in Edinburgh ; united with prayer, praise, and a most appropriate exhortation to the scholars then dismissed,

fully taught. They receive each a Bible, with their name upon it, and a single weighty sentence marked under it, as pronounced by the minister, who delivers it; also, an *address* is given to those scholars who are then to enter, and to those that remain. About *sixty children* were present, beside grown people. My God, give me the souls of all that have been, are now, or ever shall be in that school. O that I may meet them all on the right hand, at the great day of *decision*! They *now* amount to *four hundred and eighty-nine*. My God I found sweetly present with us. On Thursday, as usual, he condescended to meet with us of a truth, and renewed my strength, exhausted before by two hours' close conversation with *one* who seems to be athirst for present salvation—for living wholly for and with God. Blessed Lord, let none turn her out of the way: help her to press on in the good way. Though weakness itself, yet, gracious God, put thy words in my mouth on every such occasion; then, speaking under an unction from on high, it shall be in the demonstration of the Spirit and with power. I long to be more useful. Indulgent Lord, grant my request; and take the glory of all, and make me more thankful for thy past goodness. On Wednesday evening, my God was, in straits, a present aid. Supposing danger was nigh, I felt desirous to shun it, and cried unto the Lord, who, in a moment, sent these words with sweetness, and a degree of power, so as to calm my fears, and enable me to adore his goodness: "What time I am afraid, I will put my trust in thee." O to be more grateful.

July 5. My Christian experience for these eight days past is very similar to the preceding week—nothing worthy of remark. Only upon the whole, I find myself strengthened for duty in body and mind, and fitted for what I was called to. On Monday morning, in secret prayer, the Lord corrected a mistake I have sometimes of late made, in pressing after every new-covenant blessing, namely, allowing a vehement desire after what I have not yet *attained*, to make me overlook what I had, through mercy, obtained; thereby lessening present enjoyment, and engendering a degree of impatience. My God shows me, as he has done formerly, the most excellent way is, that, while pleading in a meek and patient spirit, faith must be exercised; the heart opened for present reception: believing the Lord is willing *now* to give, for Christ's sake, what is asked. Attempting this, I quickly found an increase. Jesus was ready to enter, and did pour himself into my heart. In the evening, at the prayer meeting, I found the Lord owning me much; blessing me with sweet consciousness of his presence, which greatly increased when a select few were speaking of his dealings with their souls, as Christian prudence directed. *Here*, indeed, he seemed to bow the heavens and come down; the mountains, as it were, flowed down at his presence; my views of Father, Son, and

Holy Ghost, were *clear* and *impressive*. I felt filled with wonder and love; yea, with what mortal language cannot express. Surely it was a taste of heaven; and I bless the Father of mercies it has often been renewed since; or I may rather say continued with me. It was a meal, in the strength of which I have made many exertions. O my God, grant it may be the beginning of greater things than ever: I pant for a larger sphere of usefulness: I would be ever either getting or doing good; I would, but *thou* must give the power. On Wednesday evening, though in company, I had a sweet renewal of the blessing; aiming at faithfulness for my God, he owned and helped me: but much more so on Thursday noon, when with a few of those that love and enjoy him, and preach the gospel of Christ, who were met expecting his presence; and of a truth he more than realized our expectations. What in his love possessed we not? There seemed a heaven without, and a heaven within; but still the poverty of human language lays an embargo on my pen; but sweet, inexpressibly sweet, as these wonderful visitations are, it is their *transforming influence* I chiefly value. Give me *this*, O my God, then shall I glorify thee, in the reception of thy favours; here I feel painfully short; pity and save.

— 26. Since last date, my God has been good in various ways. On Sabbath, found it good to wait on him, and profitable to others. On Monday evening in public the Lord exceeded my expectations, blessed be his holy name. On Wednesday, from home, he helped me to great exertion: was assailed with keen temptation, but the adversary was rebuked, and I was kept in peace. On Thursday, was carried through much; felt a door of utterance *given me*, for the benefit of a female disciple in high life, desirous of being all the Lord would have her. Speak, holy Father, to her *heart*, and let her prove thou didst put “thy words in my mouth,” according to thy promise: therefore, she *felt* them. Just after, joined with two ministering servants of Christ in prayer, praise, and Christian conversation: and truly it was a Bethel indeed. O the wonderful condescension of Jehovah. Was afterward helped to profitable conversation, with power to confess my God before others; and, in the evening, had the privilege of attending a public prayer meeting. O Lord, pour a greater spirit of prayer upon all thy people.

This week, found my feelings harrowed up by reading memoirs illustrating the history of Jacobinism, by the Abbe Barruel. This work developes such dreadful hellish tenets, principles, plots, and practices, as must shock, not only Christians of every denomination, but *every person, Deists, Arians, Socinians*; yea, *every creature* that is not wholly under satanic influence, I may say, *judicial blindness and hardness of heart*. These deluded men, with their horrid devices, go to annihilate every law, human and divine; to break every social tie; to deny, not only

revelation, but even the very existence of Deity; and to make every crime, even the most atrocious, not only innocent, but meritorious; if it only contributes to accomplish the ends they have in view. This is what they term, *illuminizing* the whole world, by restoring man to original perfection: a perfection which requires no governments of any kind, nor any property, nor any subordination. How lamentable to think that these dreadful principles have taken root in almost every part of the known world, by the unabating vigilance of their abettors, who have recourse to every stratagem that the devil can suggest, or the wicked heart of fallen man devise, in order to promote their universal spread among every class of human beings; from the king on the throne, to the meanest subject. O blessed God, counteract the hellish poison, by an equal dissemination of the pure truths of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Thou art above all in power and goodness. O let not our island fall a prey to these devourers of mankind. We deserve it, but in mercy spare. Multitudes of them are among us in disguise.

In reading this shocking account, O how sweetly nigh did the adorable Saviour draw to me! how clearly did he shine on my soul! It is impossible to express what I felt in him. I saw a glorious antidote against all evil; the Healer of mankind; the comfort of his people; and their portion through all eternity. We would rejoice that *all this* is promised, and that vigorous attempts are now making for the accomplishment of it.

August 23. For these eight days past, my spiritual enjoyments have not been so great. While in the body, our frames will and must vary, even from natural causes. He that made us knows this. But still I have cause to praise my God, for many mercies since my last date. His will is very precious. I feel much satisfaction in committing my ways to him; in asking direction from him; and he gives me to feel it is not in vain to trust in him. Of this I have had a fresh proof within these few days. Yesterday he made all present delightfully sensible of his special presence, while engaged in prayer, praise, &c. But I want to get nearer Jehovah, who is the centre of my soul, I hope I may say, my God and my all, in a low degree: at least, I am kept keenly sensible of my shortcomings, and strongly desirous of being all that grace can make me. Have been much detained from the means of grace by bodily weakness and other causes, which grieved me. A gracious God is carrying on his work remarkably in different places. Lord, increase it greatly, and O be more powerfully with and among us. Still, holy Father, thou art doing wonderful things as to public matters. O the height and depth of thy goodness; it is indeed past finding out. But still I tremble, lest by our ingratitude we force thee to punish us in one way or another. My heart powerfully feels thy astonishing mercy to our guilty island, and I as deeply feel our returns are

not what they ought to be. Help, Lord, for the glory of thy name ; and pour out thy Spirit upon us, that a visible change may take place upon us as a people.

September 27. Since last date, my intercourse with the Son of God and the Saviour of my soul has been peculiarly near and sweet ; and I trust I may freely say profitable to myself, and I would hope to others. On Lord's day morning, early in secret at a throne of grace, my Jesus said, "Whatsoever ye ask in my name, it shall be done unto you." I felt sweetly surprised with his great condescension, and wished much to improve the gracious promise for others, as well as myself. Numbers of individuals crowded in upon my mind, as if pleading to be remembered, which I felt most willing to do, and had great liberty in attempting it ; yea, my heart felt so enlarged in the duty, that I wished, had it been possible, to have brought the whole world, and laid them down at the Redeemer's feet ; and to have spent days and nights in pleading for them, had the necessities of the mortal frame permitted. Soon after, when ruminating on the wonderful interview with which I had been favoured, Jesus again spoke and said, "Ask what you will and it shall be given." Here astonishment and love filled my whole soul, while I cried mightily for the prosperity of Zion. In the house of God, soon after, my heart was lifted up to the Hearer of prayer, in behalf of all he brought before me. Monday and Tuesday, had sweet renewals of the promise ; yea, the simple recalling of the gracious words brought instant comfort and much sweetness, with strong desires to pray without ceasing. But quickly the combined powers of darkness attacked me, which surprised me greatly, supposing I had only to ask and receive. I cried to the Lord all Wednesday and Thursday morning, that he would answer for himself, if it *were he* that had spoken ; (for the adversary slyly, yea, strongly insinuated that it was *not* ;) and Jesus again greatly comforted me, and confirmed my soul in the sweet belief it was indeed *himself*, and that he would do as he had spoken ; but the *time when* he left with himself, and to me it is given to pray and wait. On Thursday, as usual, we were visited with the divine presence remarkably. Blessed Lord, come quickly, and grant me all I have asked for myself and for others ; and let mine eyes see the prosperity of thy Zion.

December 20. These last eight days, as the former, have been marked with fresh proofs of the loving kindness of Him who is rich in mercy to his people, by most sweet and sensible visits from on high, in public and in private ; in the house of prayer, and in my own habitation. These are exhilarating to the human mind, and raise it above all sublunary things. They open a new world, realized by faith, wherein dwelleth righteousness : a world of angels, and of the spirits of just men made perfect ; but above all, the Lord our righteousness abideth there ; God the Father,

Son, and Holy Ghost; and the Christian is enabled to feel, through mercy, the power of this world to come. But O, to get nearer to my God, to my adorable Saviour, while here below. O to get fully possessed of all that I see is purchased by the Friend of sinners : how far from this : speak, Lord, and it shall be done. One word, one touch, yea, *one look from thee*, will accomplish it. O give these *bold acts* of faith that lay full hold of thy mighty power, by which thou destroyest the works of Satan. Fill my heart with thy pure love, and make it the continual abode of thy Spirit : say, "*I will*—be it so." Amen, Lord, so let it be.

TO MISS RITCHIE.

February, 1799.

Dear Miss Ritchie's letter would not have remained so long unanswered, but that I did not feel liberty to give up to the inspection of any one letters in which my worthy friend had laid open her inmost soul without any reserve. In a recent perusal I have found them so profitable as has, after much prayer, determined me to send them. I beg they may be kept by Miss Ritchie till I determine the mode of their return. I have none of an older date than 1789; and in several of them only the day of the month is mentioned; which leads me to conclude they will not answer the end intended by Miss Ritchie, or the friends that request them. They are indeed valuable, but too particular to be made public; and so overrate my poor epistles, that I feel hurt with the idea of any but myself looking into them. I have made a few, but very few, erasures. If the end intended can be answered by Miss Ritchie's perusal alone, it would be well.

I feel my loss; such a praying friend, and deeply experienced Christian, is rarely to be met with. But thanks, eternal thanks, to the Father of mercies, and God of all consolation, who has taught, and does permit me, to come to the *fountain*. Of late, he has brought me near to himself. I hope I may venture to say my prospects widen, my experience deepens : I seem to sink deeper into Deity, and more than ever to lose my own will. I find the will of my God so precious, I hardly know how to form a petition but "*Thy will be done;*" and he is so indulgent, so tender to me, as no language can express better than the 2d and 3d verses of the 27th chapter of Isaiah. For a considerable time past my fellowship with the Father and Son has been sensibly increasing; and, through mercy, I can also say so has *poverty of spirit*. My soul lies humble in the dust before Jehovah as a mere nothing. Yet he gives me clearly to perceive the dignity to which he has raised me, by such holy nearness to, and divine communion with, the sacred Three. Of late I have been favoured with a more clear, satisfactory, and impressive view of the personality of the Holy Spirit than for some time past :

such a powerful notice on my mind of his dignity, divinity, and equality with the Father and the Son, as I cannot express; of his good will to man; and of the great and important part he takes in the salvation of sinners, by all his diversified operations: preparing their mind to receive, and actually applying, every new-covenant blessing, so dearly purchased by the Lord Jesus; but freely bestowed upon penitent sinners. These are precious manifestations; but I am aware it is not *merely enjoyment*, however exquisite, that ascertains their value, but their *transforming influence*. May my God give me to prove this to its greatest extent.

I hope Mrs. Johnson's manuscripts will appear to advantage. I trust they are left in hands able, under the divine influence, to make a judicious selection. Miss Ritchie will accept of my thanks for her letter, though the notification was painful. This I send by post; the packet will be despatched this week as directed. I hope unity prevails, and that the work of God prospers in Bristol. I am Miss Ritchie's well wisher in the Lord.

D. MAXWELL.

TO MISS RITCHIE.

December 3, 1799.

I feel for dear Miss Ritchie's severe trials, but believe it is her privilege to rise above the painful dispensation; and with heartfelt resignation to say, "It is the doing of my God, whose will is so precious to me I cannot choose;" yet, at the same time, I tenderly feel her loss. Apathy is no friend to religion: but it is in the nature of divine love to rise superior to whatever would press it down; it must be above, it is a noble, generous principle. May this pure love flow in copious streams through our souls, and daily increase. Speaking after the manner of men, it is indeed a severe stroke to the society; but I see it is such an easy matter for the Lord, who loves his people, fully and quickly to supply the vacancy, that I am not permitted to dwell upon it. *God is love*: what an endearing character! I seem to see and feel that all things may be obtained by prayer, which are for the glory of God and the real good of those that belong to him, whether as individuals or as a collective body. Some weeks ago Jesus said to me, when at a throne of grace, "Whatsoever you ask in my name, it shall be done unto you." These words seemed to set fire to my soul: multitudes were set before me for whom to pray; and I would have grasped the whole world of sinners, and brought them to the dear Redeemer. Soon after this, when meditating upon the wonderful condescension of my Lord, in speaking thus graciously and familiarly to his dust and ashes, he again drew nigh, and said, "Yea, ask what you will, and it shall be given." I felt lost and swallowed up in *wonder, love, and praise*. No language can express my feelings; but

from the holy nearness to Deity with which Miss Ritchie is favoured, she can suppose what they were. I endeavoured to improve the great latitude given me, and have often wished that the feeble body would have permitted my spending nights and days at a throne of grace. It has proved a strong stimulus to prayer; and my condescending Lord has given many powerful renewals of the delightful manifestation, which adds fuel to the fire he has kindled. May every end designed by the Friend of sinners be answered by it.

For many months I have been getting nearer to *Jehovah*. O what in my intercourse with him possess I not! What holy, reverential awe! what depths of love! what glories open to my view! Eternity alone can unfold the wonders of his love to me. Assist by your prayers, that I may be found faithful, fruitful, and more useful.

The Edinburgh society is in a more promising state than usual. The class that meets in my house is become quite a Penue! Deity is so present that all within each heart confesses a present God. Had time permitted, I would have given you a detail of my spiritual enjoyments, under the word preached last Lord's day by Mr. Henshaw: suffice it to say, it was not only the house of God, but the gate of heaven. Three of those with whom I meet in band are struggling to step into the liberty of God's people. Help them forward. I shall be pleased to hear that your grief is lost in love and praise: and your brother's place well filled up. Please give my Christian remembrance to Mr. and Mrs. Botts. In haste, I remain, with Christian regard, dear Miss Ritchie's friend in Jesus,

D. MAXWELL.

CHAPTER XXXV.—1800.

Diary and correspondence continued.

Jan. 3. My wishes, expectations, and prayers, for a remarkable visitation from my God, have not been so fully granted as I hoped for; I mean, on the *last* day of the former, and the *first* day of this year. But upon every slight survey of the Lord's dealings with me, in the course of the preceding year, I may venture to say the scale of mercy has almost continually preponderated; and I would hope, I may also add, I trust I have not lost ground, though I have much cause to *blush* that I have not gained more. When I consider the unwearied goodness of my God; the astonishingly rich and numberless manifestations of divine love with which I have been favoured; the blessed times of nearness to Deity I have enjoyed; the holy familiarity *Jehovah* has allowed me with himself; the sweet and sensible union I have enjoyed with the Lord Jesus Christ; the clear and

impressive notice of future events given me respecting myself and others; the precious, soul-animating words spoken to me by my adorable Lord and Saviour; the wonderful effects produced by them on my whole frame; the force of them that still remains with me, with the sure belief of their full accomplishment; the many exertions and appearances of my God for me, when tempted, tried, and greatly troubled; all excite my wonder and grief, that my progress heavenward has not been more *evident*. Blessed Father, forgive and pity thy poor child, who cannot forgive herself; and who, to the present moment, pants to be all thou wouldst have her. I humbly thank and adore thee for all the rich mercies of the past year. May *they*, while I am spared, increase my power to make suitable returns for Christ's sake.

March 7. Since the 9th of February I have been confined, but my God mixed mercy with the dispensation; especially, in allowing me an unusual spirit of prayer, even when confined to bed. May He who gave it answer his Spirit's cry in my heart *now*, when he has seen meet to raise me up again; and give me to feel that the painful visitation bringeth forth the peaceable fruits of righteousness; as a proof I have, at least, been aiming at being properly exercised during its continuance. What helpless creatures are we without continual aid from on high at all times; but particularly when in the furnace of affliction. Blessed God, make manifest thy mighty power in my weakness; and let me feel thee ever nigh, and thus be solidly happy in thyself. Save, O save me, to the utmost save; deliver from every desire that does not centre in thy will.

May 9. Still my God forsakes not his needy creature, though unfaithful and unfruitful: blessed Lord, give a deeper sense of my infinite obligations, and greatly increase them. My mortal frame has, these eight days, rather impeded the lively exercises of the soul, and at times damped sensibly my *vigour* of mind; yet, through the good hand of my God upon me, I have had, and truly enjoyed, most delightful manifestations of divine love. On last Monday evening I felt, on entering the house of prayer, a universal dampoverspread my soul; I almost regretted I had come out; but, soon after, my God and Saviour drew nigh, and gave me to enjoy a plenitude of the divine presence. In the morning of that day, while with those who I had reason to fear knew not the Lord, and admiring the beauties of nature, in her various productions, and her great exertions, the Lord Jesus in a moment manifested his presence, and instantly arrested all the attention I was paying to the work of his hands, and fixed it on *himself*. *Here* all the affectionate powers of my soul centred. On Wednesday morning, in secret, at a throne of grace, he also felt very nigh, made it a sweet time, and seemed to assure me he would be with me when attempting to call on the Father through him. Soon after, when employed in this delightful exercise, and sing-

ing his praise, with one of his ministering servants, we found it a Bethel indeed. God the Father and Son felt intimately nigh. Surely what the Lord gives at *one* time, he can give at *all* times. I was drawn out in strong desire that it might be so, in so far as humanity would permit. On Thursday in public, heard a precious discourse from, "Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord." What was said entirely agreed with my own experience: it was a profitable time; but in the evening I proved a painful reverse; the corruptible body pressed down the soul. I could only lie, as a blank, in the hand of the Lord; unable for any vigorous exertions. I looked to Jesus, and enjoyed a smile. O how precious is he to my soul. In the course of these eight days, I have seen most plainly the hand of the Lord made bare for me in several temporal concerns; meeting with difficulties, I looked to him for direction and wisdom; well knowing that without this I could accomplish nothing, and that the best way to get help from the *creature* was to apply to the Creator, and he literally answered me. I find not only in religious, but also in temporal things, he kindly condescends to my weaknesses, wants, and ignorance. For *this* reason it is, and *must* be, that I am carried through such multifarious business, most of which is far above my natural abilities. I sensibly feel my own weakness, and it is well I do, as it carries me often to a throne of grace for wisdom and power, and as occasion calls, I obtain a small measure, sufficient for the time, and feel to whom I am indebted. He inclines me to give him all the glory. Happy are those whose *God is the Lord*.

August 22. My God has shown great mercy since the 15th instant, many precious visits from on high. Last Friday, when much depressed, God the Father and Son drew graciously nigh, lifted up the hands that were hanging down, and confirmed the feeble knees. Blessed be his holy name. On Saturday, when meditating on divine things, Jesus broke in upon my soul, and gave a stronger testimony, by his Spirit, for sanctification, than for a considerable time past. On Sunday morning, I longed to go to the house of God; and when there, felt a strong hungering and thirsting for all the new-covenant blessings, and expected great things; of which a good and gracious Lord, at the Monday evening prayer meeting, in some good measure made me taste. The adversary greatly withstood my going, but was conquered; and I was richly repaid by a profusion (if I may use the term) of the divine presence; deep, intimate fellowship with the Father and Son; which has continued with me in a measure to the present moment. How deep my obligations to redeeming love! Lord, carry on thy work in my soul, and fill me with holy, humble love. O make me more faithful, more fruitful, and more insensible to the trials of life. On Wednesday, in the prospect of being from home, and with those that perhaps

know little of experimental religion, I cried to the Lord to help me to be watchful, solemn, serious. I feared grieving, in any degree, my gracious God, and felt very poorly in body and spirit; and O, how literally was I heard and assisted, so as to call forth gratitude and love. On Thursday, was unexpectedly tried in different ways, and especially by the want of the precious meeting of this day: but my God and Saviour was nigh, and this morning he has given me cause to praise him on my own account; and also on that of others. Notwithstanding all this goodness, yet "still heavy is my heart—still sink my spirits down." Lord, I commit all my griefs and cares to thee; raise me above them; let not the corruptible body press down the immortal soul.

November 28. Since the 10th of October, I have, by the appointment of Him whose tender mercies are over all his works, suffered much in body, from a long disorder; with all its concomitants—weakness of nerves and spirits, flatness of mind, &c., to which have been added various painful exercises; yet mixed with many mercies, for which I would be grateful.

December 5. Still my God continues, in a measure, to heal both soul and body, though slowly. He gives me sweetly to see his hand in many things daily, though not so much in the way of strong joy: yet I feel my God is with me, ordering all things for me—levelling mountains—making rough places plain—disappointing my fears often—frequently granting my desires, and giving more power and comfort in prayer; but still I feel weak as helpless infancy. Lord, help me to trust more in thee. Years ago, the Lord promised me that I should not be careful in the year of drought or scarcity. That promise has, of late, often passed through my mind with a sweet consciousness that he is in these days of great scarcity preserving me from anxiety and sinful carefulness. He also is giving me clearly to see that he is doing as he promised many months ago, (when a little embarrassed as to pecuniary matters, being disappointed where I expected assistance,) that he himself would undertake my cause and help me; and of a truth he has done it. I desire also, with gratitude and humility, to record another proof of his goodness, yea, two, respecting the great temporal concern he hath committed to me.

— 26. By the good hand of my God upon me I am brought to the end of another eight days. I have reason to bless the Lord, that no remarkably distressing event has taken place in my family, or person, or connections. My health is rather better, and my desires after God and his fullest salvation are increasing. Yesterday, in our meeting, I enjoyed a sweet sense of the divine presence, so as to solemnize and tranquillize my mind; I was favoured with an unexpected, impressive view of the sacred Trinity:—found all within confessing a present Deity.

Every thought, for the time, was brought into willing subjection. In the evening, endeavouring to trust in the Lord, in the prospect of a trial, I was not disappointed, but was helped to rise above the creature. Evermore, O God, may it be so, with respect to every person, place, and thing; and be thou all in all to me. In secret, in social, and in family prayer, have found it good, since last date, to draw nigh to God; but still, have not obtained all I asked, with respect to ending this year and beginning the next. Perhaps my God will come and leave a blessing; but he has given me, in mercy, unexpected opportunities of assisting the poor, and also most unexpected assistance as to pecuniary matters. O that it might be as the widow's barrel of meal and cruise of oil. I find much cause to grieve that I move so slowly in the good way, and do not improve, as I ought, all my advantages. Help, Lord, for the glory of thy name; and come quickly, and grant my requests.

TO THE REV. ALEXANDER MATHER.

February, 1800.

REV. SIR,—I heard with regret, some little time ago, of your indisposition; and now take an opportunity of expressing, with much sincerity, my Christian sympathy. This sickness, I hope, is not unto death, but for the glory of God, to whose cause, for many years, you have devoted, and not in vain, your time, strength, and talents. A rich reward, not of debt but of grace, awaits you. But if it is *His will*, who cannot err, I hope and pray it will be at a much later period that he shall dismiss you from your successful and happy toil. I am led to pray thus, for the sake of his people; many of whom you have been the honoured instrument, not only of leading to the knowledge of salvation by the remission of sin; but, likewise, of directing into the clear view and *happy possession* of that *perfect love* which excludes all tormenting fear.

Having thus fed many, I trust you feel now, while in a state of weakness, your own soul richly replenished with copious streams of pure love, and are sinking deeper and deeper into Deity: that you are ripening apace for the granary above; that heavenly country, where the inhabitants say not, they are sick; where faith is lost in sight, and hope in full fruition. Hail, auspicious day! Till then, may our gracious God give us sweet foretastes of that perfect and eternal bliss.

My God lays me, though unworthy, under deep obligations, by his tender, bountiful dealings with my soul. I remember with gratitude the solid advantage I reaped from repeated conversations with you, a great many years ago, upon the delightful subject of *perfect love*. I was then in the ardent pursuit of it, though far from being fully instructed respecting its nature.

Your views entirely coincided with mine; and, by your valuable letters afterward, these views were made more impressive; and, through the tender mercy of my God, I was enabled soon after to testify, from happy experience, the sovereign efficacy of the blood of Jesus.

Since then I have much cause to praise him. He has considerably deepened my experience, and greatly extended my prospects, though yet I am very far short of the Christian standard. At times I am so let into Jehovah, permitted so to sink into Deity, as I can by no words express. My enjoyment is exquisite; but always guarded by a *sacred awe*. It is, indeed, a heaven of pure love, that lays the creature low, while yet every power of the soul seems expanded, and the whole heart enlarged, with keen desire, to grasp the INFINITE.

Lately I have been unusually indulged with clear, impressive views of the whole *Godhead*—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. My perception of a trinity of persons, in the unity of essence, is so unclouded as mortal language would in vain attempt to express. This great mystery, I have often thought, is not a proper subject for disputation. The line of human reason is by far too short to sound its depth. How infinitely indebted, then, are we to a gracious God, who gives his people such a clear view and *firm and cordial belief* of the *actual existence* of these THREE SACRED PERSONS in the one individual GODHEAD. Though we cannot define the *mode of this existence*, yet we are sweetly and deeply conscious of the different characters and offices which they sustain in the salvation of man. “They sweetly all agree to save a world of sinners lost.” This we know, and also *experience*.

To my apprehension, my fellowship is sometimes with the Father *alone*; at others, with the Son, and not seldom with Father, Son, and Spirit. How great the mystery of godliness! O that I may be enabled fully to improve to the utmost this wonderful intercourse with Deity; aware that it is no farther useful than *as it proves of an assimilating nature*.

It will give me real satisfaction to hear that Mr. Mather is gaining ground of his complaints, either by his own or a borrowed pen. With Christian wishes for his recovery, and farther usefulness in the church of Christ, I remain his sincere well wisher in the Lord Jesus Christ,

D. MAXWELL.

TO MISS RITCHIE.

July 3, 1800.

I am sorry to see, by Miss Ritchie's kind letter, that I neglected to give any directions about the papers in her hands. Mr. Henshaw, who proposes going to conference, is the bearer of this, and is so good as to say he will bring them to Scotland

when he returns. I am pleased to see that that arm which is full of power has raised you above the painful pressure caused by your brother's removal. Surely our God delighteth in the happiness of his children. "God is love." How deeply have I proved this, since my last to Miss Ritchie. My soul hath been fed as with marrow and fatness. Brought sensibly nearer to Jehovah, I have had more of his fulness poured into my soul; such deep intimate fellowship with him as no language can express: yet no rapturous joy. My experience never runs in this channel. It is all (though exquisite enjoyment) a solemn, sacred awe, that, as it were, arrests all the powers of the mind, and keeps them as still as the grave before Jehovah; it fills the soul with a holy, religious recollection, self-possession, strong inward attraction, and silence. The personality of the sacred Three continues clear, to my mind, as the noonday: views of the whole Godhead become more frequent, and more impressive;—Jesus condescends to talk with me; telling me that "whatever I ask in his name, it shall be done for me." He gives many powerful renewals of the life, and power, and comfort that attended these precious words when he first spoke them to my wondering soul. Many weeks after that memorable occasion, when I had no immediate expectation of hearing the voice of my heavenly shepherd, though at the time I was earnestly requesting a promise respecting an affair I had much at heart, he broke in with sweet surprise, and said, "If I have said, Ask what you will, and it shall be done, what need of a promise?" Much prayer, since then, has ascended for the church of Christ, and many, yea, numberless individuals; and I must conclude that whatever has been asked agreeably to his will shall be granted. All this goodness of the Lord has not prevented, but rather provoked the malice of the adverse powers, who have done all they were permitted, to harass me; but the name of the Lord is, I prove, a strong tower, to which I fly, and they dare not enter.

I am pleased to hear that there has been a little revival of the work at Otley. We go on well here, upon the whole. The presence of the Lord prevails sensibly in the prayer meetings, which are numerous; and he bears testimony to his word preached, and also to the dispensation of the sacrament of the supper; but still more remarkably does he appear in our little class here, and in the select band. I am at present obliged, after repeated interruptions, to conclude. With good wishes for still greater prosperity to your soul, and success in all your labours of love, that the name of our God may be glorified from the rising to the setting sun, is the prayer of dear Miss Ritchie's fellow traveller to Zion,

D. MAXWELL.

CHAPTER XXXVI.—1801-3.

Lady Maxwell's experience attains a greater uniformity—Diary continued.

WE now enter upon the last ten years of Lady Maxwell's life. She continued, nearly to the end, to write in her diary as frequently and as largely as before; nor, till within a few weeks of her discontinuing to write, does there appear any failure, either in her diction, or in the *eligibility* of her hand. But these years present such a *pleasing* uniformity of experience as to render it unnecessary to multiply extracts. In the few which have been selected, the editor has endeavoured, as much as possible, to seize every variation of feeling, of exercise, or enjoyment, as recorded by her ladyship. In will be seen that she had eminently attained establishment in grace—that she was rooted, grounded, and settled in love; and happily found the work of righteousness to be peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever. In the course of these ten years, she frequently suffered from bodily indisposition; but “patience had its perfect work;” and as her “outward man decayed, her inward man was renewed day by day.” The nearer she approached the heavenly world, she endeavoured to become more and more “meet for the inheritance among the saints in light,” and was ever found waiting and watching for the coming of her Lord. Her love to God; her zeal for his cause; her compassion for souls; her efforts to serve the best interests of society, remained not only unabated, but, under the solemn impressions of coming eternity, appear to have gradually acquired new energies, until her dismissal was signed, and she called to take possession of an eternal reward. To the end of her pilgrimage she acknowledged herself an unprofitable servant—an infinite debtor to free, unmerited grace: and her sole trust for final acceptance, and her only hope of eternal salvation, were founded on the atoning blood and all-prevalent intercession of Jesus Christ. His amazing condescension and love—his suitableness and all-sufficiency—the freeness and fulness of his grace, had for years been the delightful themes of her praise; and when she dropped mortality, it was to unite with the glorified spirits in the eternal anthem, “Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father: to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever.”

January 2. I bless the Father of mercies, my comforts have rather increased since last date. Had, on last Lord's day, the great privilege of entering the house of my God, and was enabled to attend without any uneasiness, either from the body, or the adversary of souls. My God is good: he often hears and answers my feeble petitions, offered up in his Son's name, though

not always in faith. I had no particular blessing on the last day of the year, not being able to wrestle for it as usual till past twelve o'clock at night. But, in the morning, during secret prayer, my Jesus drew very nigh, and I was comforted; yea, Father, Son, and Spirit felt with me; and I endeavoured to improve the precious visit from on high. In our little meeting I most sensibly enjoyed a plenitude of the presence of the sacred Trinity. It was a most remarkable time; all present felt the presence of Deity. It abode with me all the evening, though the enemy did all he could to prevent it; and this day I still feel a measure of it, though not with so much joy.

April 24. Unspeakably great has been the interposition of the Most High in behalf of Great Britain, according to gazetted accounts since last date. Lord, how wonderful is thy mercy to our guilty land! Thou hast, in the most critical moment, removed by death another potentate perfectly hostile to the interests of Great Britain, and by this stroke weakened the strength of those powers leagued with him and determined upon our destruction. Now their purposes are broken off, thanks to a God of mercy. When, O Lord, we add to this extraordinary exertion of thy goodness the happy consequences of it, which are incalculable; also, the great naval victory thou hast given us, *for it is thy doing*, over another northern kingdom, whereby they are brought low, and their designs defeated, what can we say, but that, as a people, we are utterly unworthy of all this kindness which thou hast made to pass before us. O, Father of mercies, sanctify it to us, and by thy grace deliver us as a people from our sins! Turn us to thyself, by repentance and faith, that iniquity be not our ruin. Dispose all ranks among us to give thee the glory of all that has been done for us at this time. As an individual, my heart feels grateful to the Lord, and earnestly desirous it may be so, and that multitudes may be converted by mercies that threatened judgments have not reclaimed.

August 21. *Gardiner's-hall*. Since the 7th instant, have been in heaviness through manifold temptations. While in Edinburgh my God gave me many precious times in private and public, and helped me through many unusual exertions. My spiritual enjoyments, since I came here, have greatly diminished, and fresh trials have occurred. I prove it a painful contrast. But shall I always receive good at the hand of the Lord, and never see evil? Vain expectation. The latter, by his blessing, is often mercy in disguise. God is rich in goodness to his people; and when, at any time, he afflicts, it is in *very* faithfulness. But he knows, when I prove him even at a partial distance, all nature wears a gloom: I can enjoy nothing. Come near, then, O holy God and true, and ever keep me near to thyself. O Jesus, where thou art is heaven, and nowhere else! Take full possession of me. O what goodness has the Lord made to pass

before me for many years past ! But especially of late years he has greatly disclosed to me the deep things of Deity, and given me a holy intimacy with unseen objects, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. He has wrought out numberless deliverances for me ; yea, performed all things for me ; often exceeding my expectations, though enlarged. O that I could add, I have profited *in proportion* ! have grown up into Christ my living Head in all things. I blush to think how poor my progress. Speak, O my God, and it shall be so no more.

September 11. Still the Lord condescends to bless with a measure of health, and has, in much mercy, *fully* and *finally* delivered me from a protracted and teasing business that has long tried me. It is *his* own doing, and to him be all the glory. In the course of a kind providence, and under, I trust, divine direction, I have been from home, for a short time, for health ; after precious promises given for a blessing by the way, and my God preserved and brought me home in peace, after some feeble attempts to do good on the road. On the day I came home I enjoyed a precious season from the gracious presence of Deity, while conversing with a minister, which has continued, and has been repeated : especially on last Lord's day morning in public, when, after much prayer and painful temptation, my God and Saviour felt wonderfully nigh, and my soul was filled with love divine, and holy sacred awe, which continued for some time. On Monday evening, in my way to the prayer meeting, my Jesus met me, and sweetly shed abroad his love in my heart ; and in the chapel, the gracious presence of Father and Son abounded, I felt surrounded with Deity ; filled with love and wonder ; permitted with favoured John, as it were, to lean by faith on the dear Redeemer's breast. O, adorable Jesus, how astonishing thy goodness and condescension to thy people ! O that I might prove more of the sanctifying influences of these blessed communications !

December 25. Still the scale of mercy preponderates in my soul. On Sabbath last, in the morning, in public, on entering the house of God I felt the heavenly attraction strong and sweet, especially in praise and prayer, under a discourse from the fourth verse of the third chapter of Ephesians : "When Christ shall appear," &c. I felt much engaged in prayer for both speaker and hearers, and my God heard and comforted me by communion with himself and his dear Son, and by sweet, impressive views of what was included in having Jesus as the life of the soul. And when the sure marks of true love to Christ were given, light from on high shone so clearly that I could easily read these characters within. Lord, make them much more conspicuous ! On Thursday, it was a precious season : Deity drew very near—my perception of the sacred Three was very clear—and my soul big with expectation of seeing greater things. Just after,

enjoyed delightful conversation on the deep things of God. Lord help me to press on ! The increase of communion bestowed on Lord's day, still remains, and my mind feels stayed on God. Blessed Lord, what shall I say ? Thou art good beyond expression : yea, far beyond conception.

March 12, 1802. How difficult to write or speak upon the deep things of God. Since the fifth instant, the goodness of my God has been great, beyond my pen to describe. On last Friday I felt truly in the Spirit ; the heavenly attraction was strong. On Saturday, ministering to the Lord's poor was my happy employment. On Sabbath, with peculiar desire, I went to the house of prayer. During a discourse from the latter clause of the thirteenth verse of the first chapter of Ephesians, "In whom also, after that ye believed ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise," I felt much engaged with my God for a particular blessing, not for myself only, but for the speaker and hearers also, and he condescended to be easily entreated, and did literally answer. I had infinite cause to praise him. The sacred Three drew very nigh ; but more especially my fellowship was with *God the Spirit* more than ever formerly. O how much of the power of that divine Agent did I feel ! His energies were strong and very peculiar. I looked up, and asked to know what he was bestowing, and seemed to be answered, that he was *sealing* me as the *peculiar* property of Jehovah. I was so deeply engaged with the Holy Spirit, so intensely desirous to attend to his wonderful operations upon my mind, that every power and faculty felt upon the stretch. O my God, make me faithful to the many favours bestowed !

July 2. The tender mercies of my God have neither been few nor small since last date. The cry of my heart has daily and hourly been to him for *more* grace—for *all* grace. The enemy has opposed and tried ; but God is above men and devils. How great the power of prayer ! How delightful to prove *him* the Hearer of it ! I cry unto him, and he, in much mercy, answereth, both as to temporal and spiritual mercies. I have been favoured with many sweet proofs of this the last week. How great my obligations ! I do feel them. He carries me through every difficulty. When persons, places, or things are necessary, he condescends to provide them ; when providential dispensations are rich and pleasing, he prevents me from taking too much complacency in them. I can truly say that the *greatest* satisfaction I feel in them is, their bearing so evidently the divine signature. As I advance in the good way, my God increases my light, widens my prospects, and calls me to come up higher. Through mercy I do get sweetly near to him by the Lord Jesus, the *only way* ; and I *desire no other*. I prove him very precious : I dwell under the covert of this Rock, and am secure. O to drink deeper into his Spirit !

Oct. 29. Though confined almost constantly since last date, the 9th instant, it has yet been a season wherein I have had much cause for praise, unceasing praise. O how has the scale of divine love preponderated! While afflicted in body, how has my God compassed me about with his gracious presence and precious promises; not only for natural life, but also that my soul should prosper; that my bodily complaints should be overruled for his glory, and I spared to be an ornament to his church. Amen. Lord, all things are possible to thee. O bless me with that degree of faith that smiles at impossibilities, and says, It shall be done. For some weeks past I have felt as if come, by faith, to the general assembly and church of the first-born, and to the spirits of just men made perfect. O to be able to praise my God as I wish: I would my every breath were prayer and praise. Speak, holy Father, and it shall be so. Yesterday, in conversation with a Christian friend or two, the divine presence so filled the place, and also my soul, as is impossible to express. I adore the great *meritorious Cause* of these great privileges. O Lamb of God, what hast thou done for sinners! *Eternity* alone can develop the great mystery of thy inexpressible love. While in the body how little are we capable of receiving.

Dec. 17. Since the 8th instant my spiritual enjoyments have rather increased, as have also my bodily strength and spirits. During this tedious illness, I have been kept dreading too great attention to the body; and have felt grateful, for some days past, to feel that I am gradually rising, by returning health, above these paltry concerns. I would always live in a spirit of sacrifice. Still confined from the house of God, I feel my loss, and look forward with comfort to the enjoyment of that privilege. Of late have found secret prayer, and searching the Scriptures, sources of increasing comfort. Yesterday the Lord was sweetly present with me in the morning, and greatly comforted me through the channel of his word; and also while joining a few Christian friends in prayer, praise, and Christian conference. Afterward, in company with a larger circle, with gratitude I would acknowledge the goodness of the Lord, in giving a greater power to speak of the deep things of God than I expected, considering my present weakness. O that I might love him more. Speak, Lord, and it shall be so; kindle a stronger flame of divine love than ever in my heart: ever keep it alive.

Feb. 25, 1803. On taking up my pen, at this time, to make mention of the goodness of my God, I feel my heart going out after him, and all that degree of his fulness that the feeble powers of humanity can admit. O Lord, what is man that thou hast been so mindful of him; made such ample, yea, superabounding provision for his eternal welfare; and while in this vale of tears dost so graciously and so frequently give him to drink of the brook by the way; whereby his head is lifted up, and a song of

praise put in his mouth ? Thou dost, blessed Lord, greatly magnify the riches of thy grace in thy dealings with thy people : O for a heart to praise thee : O let my every word, thought, act, be praise. Detained last Lord's day from his house, which I felt a keen trial, but I was favoured with the most delightful meditations upon, and enjoyment by faith of, future glory. It is impossible to express the clear and powerfully impressive views I had of the Father and the Son, seated on the throne of glory ; but I look for far greater things, as it respects conformity to the divine image. This my soul thirsteth for with vehement desire. Condescend, holy Father, to fulfil these desires ; surely they are implanted by thy Spirit. Enjoyed repeated opportunities, these days past, of endeavouring to do good to saints and sinners. Lord, thou canst bless the most inadequate means, and thereby render them effectual. On Thursday, felt rather cast down, from various natural causes ; I cried unto the Lord, who in tender compassion gave ear unto my supplications, and dealt most bountifully with me, and those present. He made it a time of great refreshing, by a plenitude of the divine presence. My whole soul felt deeply solemnized. The veil of the temple seemed to be rent, and access given to enter into the holy of holies. I feel truly unworthy of all his goodness. Blessed Jesus, it is bestowed for thy sake ; make and keep me humble. I feel, I bless God, I *deeply* feel my poverty ; mercies bestowed do not make me high minded. The higher I am raised by these frequent and precious manifestations, the deeper I seem to sink ; may it ever be so.

May 27. The increase of, nearness to, and communion with Deity, with which I was favoured on Monday the 23d, through the goodness of my God, still continues, though the adversary has made various attempts to rob me of it. Yet I am constrained to follow on ; I cannot rest in what is already bestowed. My views grow more extensive of the privileges of Christians, of that holy familiarity with Deity which Christ has purchased for them ; of those superior degrees of conformity to the divine image they may expect who through grace are determined to be *all* for God ; to seek and find their all in him. My feeble pen cannot describe all I see by faith on this subject ; I also sweetly taste of it. O that both may continue and increase.

Sept. 23. The *Lord God Omnipotent reigneth*. Here is a solid source of consolation, amid all these shakings of the nations, these violent attempts for the subversion of all order and good government ; these subtle, various, and Satanical endeavours to destroy the belief of the *truth* as it is in *Jesus* ; yea, to undeify the great Author of life and salvation ; and thereby, if possible, to rob the Christian of his well grounded hope of eternal happiness. How vain all these feeble attempts. " He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh ; the Lord shall have them in derision ;

he shall break them with a rod of iron, and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." The *foundation* Jehovah hath laid for the hope of his people standeth sure: the gates of hell shall never prevail against it. Lord, open the eyes of deluded sinners, before their feet stumble upon the dark mountains; and O may I praise thee *now*, and through all *eternity*, that thou hast opened *mine*, not only to *see* my danger, but to *escape* it; and also allowed me such delightful communion and fellowship with the Father and the Son as still keeps me pressing on. Lord, quicken my pace.

CHAPTER XXXVII.—1804-7.

Diary continued.

January 27. Still the monument of sparing mercy, and still much cause given me to say, "Bless the Lord, O my soul," for past and present favours. How grateful ought I to be. Last Lord's day morning, in secret, I was led to plead for much of the divine presence. In my way to the house of God, I looked up for the answer of prayer, and not in vain. The sacred Three drew divinely near; and still nearer when singing the praises of my God. In public I seemed to get in spirit above all created good; my soul soared beyond the skies. The subject under discussion afforded much profit and delight: the Lord shone gloriously upon my soul, and my spiritual enjoyment was exquisite. I proved my union with the Lord Jesus inexpressibly intimate and close; while my views of the Father and the Holy Spirit were as clear to the eye of faith as the sun in his meridian brightness, and at the same time most impressive: this continued for some days.

May 25. I have been confined to the house with a severe cold, but had much cause to bless the Father of mercies that he gave me health to attend at the annual examination of my week-day school. I had the satisfaction of dismissing a goodly number of scholars well taught, and of putting into the hand of *each* that sacred volume which, with the blessing of the Lord, is able to make them wise to salvation. O God, seal the truth it contains upon each of their hearts; and O, give thy peculiar countenance to those now received to supply their place. Without *this*, all my attempts to profit my fellow creatures, whether old or young, will prove ineffectual. Encouraged by thy faithful word of promise, that I shall turn many to righteousness, however unlikely, speaking after the manner of men, I desire to be found continually occupied in whatever has either a more immediate or remote tendency to effect this great purpose. Though

prevented the use of the public means of grace this week, yet my God has been gracious; he has been ever with me. Yesterday, he was unspeakably good during our little meeting. Some time before it, when looking up to him for his presence, a most solemn sense of eternal things rested upon my mind; much sacred awe filled my breast; and when engaged he gave me liberty to speak of the deep things of God, as felt in my own soul, and I trust under an unction from on high. How great my obligations! How poor my returns!

September 28. I have reason to think that the work of grace in my soul is going forward. My intercourse with Deity increases: my God deals most tenderly and liberally with me. May I to the utmost improve his condescending goodness. He has, in a sensible manner, heard my prayer, put up on the second instant. I do feel more *independent* of the creature; of course, I *rely* more on the Creator, and not in vain. Lord, I would, more closely and humbly than ever, walk with thee. Increase my power. Have had several sweet seasons since last date. Yesterday, especially, my heart felt lifted up when speaking of the things of God. I was deeply impressed with a sense of his astonishing love in the redemption of sinners; and enjoyed unusual liberty of speech when dwelling on the pleasing, the delightful theme. But O, how little of that vast plan can our limited powers take in! even angels themselves, those bright intelligences, far superior to man, are represented as desiring to look into, and deeply to consider this stupendous mystery. Surely Jehovah himself alone knows the height and depth of it.

October 19. The God of all grace and consolation still remembers his unworthy creature for good. On Lord's day morning, in public, I did not wait upon my God in vain. On Monday, all day, I enjoyed a plenitude of the gracious presence of the Trinity. What clear notice of the truth of this mysterious doctrine does the Lord impress upon my mind! What comforts flow from it! Yet I seldom make it a subject of discussion, though I firmly believe it. My limited powers may not be able to conceive how *three* persons can exist in *one numerical* essence, nor am I called to it: *God has said it*, and that is enough. The delightful fellowship I enjoy with each of these sacred persons brings with it a deeper and more experimental conviction of the *truth* of the doctrine, than ten thousand most conclusive arguments could ever effect.

December 28. For these days past, I have been asking of my God to grant me a token for good, before the expiration of this year; and, of a truth, he has heard and answered my request oftener than once. More especially, on Tuesday morning, in public, when singing his praises before sermon, *Jehovah* not only drew nigh in all the grandeur of Deity, but his glory seemed to fill the place. No language can express *what I felt*, or *how I*

felt. I have had *many* solemn manifestations of the kind, but *this* exceeded them all: wonder and love pervaded my whole soul while I sunk into nothing before the great I AM. O that great and good ends may be answered by it.

February 9, 1805. Through the tender mercy of my God, I have been enabled to make many exertions in the path of duty, in the course of these last eight days, which to nature appeared most formidable; but, through divine aid, I easily accomplished them. Have also gained several victories over *self* in the same way. Help, Lord, to retain the ground gained. Yesterday, the Lord drew sweetly near, while calling on him in our little meeting. It is truly in general a very profitable one, and no less comfortable. How uniformly does the God we love, and endeavour to serve, favour us with his gracious presence; not only during the meeting, but in conversation after it. These two last Thursdays I felt uncommonly stirred up; yea, as it were, impelled to press on my own heart, and the hearts of all present, the great necessity of living for eternity. How trifling and insignificant the things of time, when compared with those of an eternal world.

September 13. Since the second ultimo I have been confined to my chamber, and much to my bed; my mind has been flat; my spirits weak; and my nerves a good deal affected, by the effects of a fever. Yet, through the tender mercy of God, the adversary is in a great measure chained up. How good is the Father of mercies! He is again, as often formerly, beginning to restore me to a measure of health, though very slowly. How many the temporal mercies enjoyed in this long season of affliction. Every outward accommodation, kindness, and all proper medical assistance, &c., &c. O for gratitude! Yesterday my God drew near; Jehovah came down, and my soul rejoiced. O Lord, come nearer still; fully restore and perfect what concerns body, soul, spirit, and outward estate.

— 27. Through mercy I still live, and continue to gain a little upon my bodily affliction, and experience many mercies: but still languor of mind and weakness of nerves try me. At times my God draws near: he did so yesterday, (Thursday,) and answered prayer. I trust it is only an alteration of *enjoyment*, not of *possession*; but even *this* is painful. O my God, quickly come, and fill with all thy communicable fulness. I am thankful for power to speak for God, and the profit of my fellow creatures. Lord, follow *simple language* with *divine power*; then shall thy promise be fulfilled, that I shall “turn many from darkness to light, and strengthen the brethren.” How insipid is all created good without intimate fellowship with Deity! My mind is at present exercised about some important business, which affects my spirits; though the Lord has condescended to favour me with many precious promises respecting the success

of it. Forgive me, gracious Father, and make me stronger in the faith.

December 13. Since last date I have, through rich mercy, enjoyed much communion with Deity, more especially with *Jehovah*. O how inexpressibly delightful! What a heaven of silent love! I prove in a small degree that the continual view of infinite Excellence tends greatly to refine the moral taste; to expand and enlarge the powers of the soul; and gives more and more extensive views of the perfections of Deity. But, while in the body, how little can we take in; how very limited are our views of these glorious objects. Lord, enlarge my scanty thought to know the wonders of thy love; and unloose my stammering tongue, to tell of them under a divine influence. On Lord's day morning, God was good to his unworthy creature in his house of prayer; and just afterward opened my mouth in private to speak to the case of a distressed Christian, who had laboured long in the furnace of the most painful temptations. She is since in a great measure delivered, and has been favoured with glorious views of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit as her portion. On this occasion it appeared more clearly to me than ever formerly that God had condescended to put his words in my mouth. On Thursday, during our class meeting, I had a precious time; when speaking of his loving kindness, the fire of divine love was sensibly increased in my soul, and in the hearts of those present: O for gratitude.

March 14, 1806. He whose tender mercies are over all his works hath made bare his holy arm in my behalf, since the 7th instant. The trial then mentioned, he hath removed in a very unexpected manner. Neither his kingdom, nor the accomplishment of his will, cometh by observation. He gently leads to the adoption of measures, sometimes at the suggestion of others, and often by the most simple means; and, in the use of these, brings about the desired end, having previously given faith to believe for success. How wonderful are thy ways, O thou God of love! I may add, how precious is faith, not only in the divine life, but in the things of the present life. Lord, increase my faith, and perfect what thou hast begun, respecting the business now mentioned, and much more in the accomplishment of these precious promises for matters of much greater importance. Found it truly good to wait on God in public last Lord's day, and to sit down at his Son's table: but much better since, as he has so quickly granted one of my requests then put up, and added much comfort with it to my soul, with some increase of faith. O to be grateful.

October 17. A God of love is still, from time to time, showing me mercy, and repeating the visits of his love. O how delightful these seasons. If any thing can be more so, it is that intercourse with which I am often favoured with the whole Deity: language

cannot express what is then enjoyed. The soul is as if absorbed in the Godhead : surrounded with it ; and all within bows before the triune God, with the deepest humility, the most profound solemnity, and indescribable serenity : the creature seems for the time lost in Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—one God, JEHOVAH. How little, then, does every earthly thing appear ! O my God, let it be ever thus with me ; then I shall be better fitted for doing and suffering all thy holy will. Last Lord's day morning, in public, it was truly a profitable and comfortable time. In a moment the Lord seemed to favour me with a retrospect of his dealings with me since he first called me to seek his face, and gave me to see it was mercy all ; and that he had not permitted me wickedly to depart from him : yea, he gave me a sweet witness from on high that, from the beginning to the present moment, I never had had one serious thought of departing from my God. But while I speak thus, I feel I have been unfaithful, unworthy, and unfruitful. Perhaps one great preservative has been a fear continually of coming short. From the first I was deeply sensible of my danger ; I durst not trust myself one moment, and, therefore, kept aloof from persons, things, and places. But, as human nature is prone to extremes, it is possible I carried this too far. Yet upon a retrospect I am inclined to think I did not lose by living so much in the spirit of sacrifice. I do not say that this plan is necessary *for all* ; but I found it so for me, and I now bless my God that he thus led me. Perhaps what suggested these meditations was the portion of Scripture spoken from the second chapter of Jeremiah, 17th to the 19th verse.

March 27, 1807. Still have cause to bless the God of grace and consolation for many mercies, known and unknown, since last date ; though my spiritual joys have not been so strong as the week before. Two *great events*, as to public affairs, have taken place very recently, which ought to make the hearts of Christians rejoice, and fill their lips with the high praises of God ; namely, 1st, *The total abolition of the slave trade by Great Britain*. Its long continuance has been the disgrace of our island. May the *Most High* crown the *noble deed* with his blessing, that it may be productive of all those happy and most important consequences that are expected from it. 2dly, The other event is also of great magnitude—the rejection of the *Roman Catholic Bill* by both houses of Parliament. Blessed be God, who hath given firmness to our king, and a large majority, in favour of both these measures. O God, what praise is due to thee ! O pour out a spirit of prayer and gratitude upon all thy own people in our island, for thy great goodness to us in these respects ; do thou enable us all to profit by it, and to show our gratitude by our obedience and love to Thee.

April 25. Through mercy I still find the Lord inviting me to

come forward, to enjoy *more fully* the rich blessings the adorable Saviour hath purchased for his people. His condescension has operated powerfully and sweetly on my heart, and greatly encouraged me to expect greater things than ever. My love to God has been increased, and to my blessed Jesus. My earnest thirst after entire conformity to the divine image is strengthened. Come, O eternal God, and give me the permanent possession of all thou hast so clearly shown me is thy will concerning me ; let nothing hinder. I have been favoured, these days past, with delightful meditations on the deep things of God ; and also at different times, with sweet communion with Deity, *alone*, and when with *others* ; and have had most pleasing sensations from the strong hope of the gospel being sent to very distant parts, where as yet no missionary exertions have been made. Blessed God, realize these hopes, and give great, exceeding great success, that the multitudes of blacks, and of the swarthy sons and daughters of Africa, may be brought to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus. They have long been enveloped in worse than Egyptian darkness, and their miseries have been greatly increased by the hellish cruelty of those who purchased and enslaved them. Yet, through the tender mercy of a gracious God, many individuals among them have had their slavery sweetened by being brought to the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ ; and now that the slave trade is abolished, and these opportunities lost thereby of hearing the gospel preached, what an unspeakable mercy will it be if a merciful God, who is no respecter of persons, so orders matters as that the gospel shall be brought to them in their own countries.

September 25. I hope I may venture to say that my most gracious God and heavenly Father does not permit me at any time to be without sweet fellowship with himself ; or if in the least interrupted, there is either a hungering or thirsting for it, or an inward grieving for my loss, and a constant hope, more or less, of its return, which is very seldom disappointed. Some days of last week I mourned, because I felt a partial distance from the grand source of all human bliss ; but soon the Father of mercies, the God of all grace and consolation, heard and answered my cries. On entering his house last Lord's day morning, which I esteemed a great privilege, after an absence of some weeks, I was enabled to join the great congregation, and what was much better, to sing his praise with grace in my heart ; a divine *something* seemed to thrill through my whole frame ; but what I felt under a discourse from, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God," *eternity* alone can explain or express. O, if I attempt to use the moderate language of humanity, there was an indescribable degree of union with the whole Deity ; a depth of exquisite communion and fellowship with each of the sacred Three ; an uncommon, experimental,

impressive view of the *Unity of essence* and *Trinity of persons*. All this continued during the whole service, yea, the whole day ; and to the present moment, I feel a measure of it. But O, when I consider the goodness of my God in favouring me with this wonderful display of his greatness, glory, and goodness, at this time, I am led to adore and bless his holy name, with my whole heart. I was ignorant, but he knew how soon I was to hear unexpected and doleful tidings of the near approach of death to a beloved and only sister, and also of a brother equally near the confines of eternity. Nature ought to feel, and “unreproved, she may drop a tear.” Religion does not destroy the human passions and affections, but refines them. I bless my God, my mind was kept composed, much drawn out in prayer ; and O, how I ought to praise my Lord, who has given me such well grounded hopes that my dear sister and brother will be eternally happy. Blessed be the name of my gracious God. O holy Father, thou hast often given me clear, soul-satisfying views of the happiness of not a few of those thou hast called hence at different times ; if thou seest it meet, allow me this privilege when my dear sister and brother shall leave this vale of tears.

November 27. I have great cause to praise a God of love, who is the hearer of prayer ; and who has so fully granted my request, respecting my dear sister's departure from this vale of tears. I was, at her desire, in some measure, frequent and fervent at a throne of grace that she might die happy ; that her faith might not fail, being at that time increased ; and truly it did not fail. Her joy for weeks before her death was unspeakable. Holy, sacred awe, sweetly tempered with a large proportion of divine love, seemed to pervade her whole soul, till she dropped the mantle of mortality, and entered into the paradise of God : that intermediate space, where blood-bought souls remain till the final judgment, when they shall enter into the joy of their Lord, which is unspeakable and full of glory ; when they shall enjoy *the beatific vision*, and be made pillars in the temple of our God, to go no more out. Blessed Jesus, what hast thou suffered and done for thy people !

December 12. He who cannot err still sees meet to keep me from the means of grace, by severity of weather, and delicacy of health, by which I suffer both in body and mind. O may I be kept from every unnecessary degree of attention to the body, and also obtain the sanctified use of every providential dispensation. I endeavour to make my confinement, through grace, profitable to my fellow creatures, by a deeper attention to the wants of the poor, especially the Lord's people, in this extreme cold and severe weather ; and during the high price of every necessary of life, even to a threatening of famine. Lord, enlarge my powers of action herein, and give heavenly wisdom. As a nation we

have had very uncommon losses at sea, both of men and property; and the clouds are dark indeed which seem to hang over our heads, as it regards political matters; beside an unprecedented spirit of revolution, which has appeared in several nations, and still threatens others, almost to the subversion of all regular governments. Thus situated, how natural to think that even the most unconcerned would be brought to consider; but, alas, it is not so; nothing short of sovereign grace can change the heart of sinners. O blessed God, with whom is the residue of the Holy Spirit, do thou then pour him out in all his diversified operations, that the thoughtless may be awakened, convinced, and converted; and thy own people built up in their most holy faith: and, O Lord, do thou greatly enlarge my spiritual borders.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.—1808-10.

Diary concluded—Lady Maxwell's last illness and death—Letter on, by the Honourable Miss Napier—Inscription on monumental tablet.

March 19. On last Lord's day I enjoyed the great privilege of being not only in the house of God, but of being richly fed with spiritual food while there, from these words: "Lord, I am thine, save me; I have sought thy precepts." It is impossible for me to say how exquisite was my enjoyment of the whole Deity, during this discourse. I was favoured with uncommon fellowship and nearness to the sacred Three: but eternity alone can fully unfold and define what the Christian feels on these wonderful and blessed occasions. Meditating upon it brings back in some measure a renewal of it. O my God, let me prove in some degree its transforming nature. Yesterday, (Thursday,) I was again favoured with the presence of the holy Trinity in our little meeting; but not in such a high degree: my comfort was rather damped by the weight of a very unexpected trial in the morning; but He who afflicteth not willingly, soon lightened the load. Blessed Lord, how tenderly dost thou deal with thy children.

June 16. GOD IS LOVE. O how great his goodness. Since the 9th instant he has, in much mercy, increased his love in my heart. He favoured me with the great privilege of entering his house last Lord's day, when he made much of his goodness to pass before me; greatly more than I had reason to expect. I was fed with marrow and fatness—intimate fellowship and communion with Father, Son, and Spirit. I felt as in the immediate presence of Deity. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. On Thursday, during our meeting, as soon as I bowed my knees, looked up to the Father of mercies, and inwardly plead for much of the divine presence; the sacred Three drew nigh; a solemn, divine

awe overspread my mind ; all within deeply felt, " God is here." It was indeed a memorable season. O my God, hasten the time when it shall always be so, and when every such visit from on high shall greatly increase holiness of heart and life, and of consequence, greater intercourse with heaven. This is what my soul hungers and thirsts after.

September 10. Since the 26th of August I have felt variously. I have been favoured, at times, with precious visits from above : my best times are in the house of my God : and, on Thursdays, at home, in secret prayer and meditation ; likewise, in conversing on the things of God, with strong desires for the eternal welfare of others. O to be faithful and successful ! On these occasions I find an earnest desire, and this proves a strong stimulus to speak. By nature I am rather shy ; but I find, in general, I obtain such assistance from on high, when thus employed, as conquers nature, and procures additional comfort to my own soul. Last Lord's day I had an opportunity of remembering the dying love of my adorable Saviour, which was a time of refreshing. I felt ashamed and grieved that I did not feel my heart overflowing with grateful love to Him who had done so much for me ; but O the riches of free grace ! In a moment the whole Deity drew near ; I felt surrounded, yea encircled in the divine arms ; I was lost in sacred astonishment and love. The whole powers of my soul were arrested, and a holy awe pervaded my mind, while I seemed to sink into Jehovah, and felt lost in his immensity. O adorable Saviour, how infinite the blessings thou hast purchased even for the fallen race of Adam ! Why is not my poor heart every moment burning with the sacred fire of divine love and gratitude to thee ? I lose myself, and into nothing fall before thee. O compassionate thy poor creature ! Enlarge my receptive powers, and keep them continually on the stretch.

December 31. Since the 22d of October, in general, my experience of divine things has not been so rich as before that period. My health has been impaired, and my confinement more than usual : yet my God has been good ; allowed me many precious seasons in public, private, and secret. My heart has been much drawn out to assist the poor, and to alleviate every species of distress among my fellow creatures in these trying times, more especially the religious poor. Lord, increase my ability ! Thou hast given me a willing heart.

January 7, 1809. The God of all grace and consolation has lengthened out my life another year, and in the course of twelve months past has given me much cause to praise him for his goodness to my soul ; for almost continual fellowship with the *whole* Deity, still *superior* to what he allowed me in the former year, though that was also great. I have enjoyed an *increase of sacred awe, solemn serenity, holy liberty, and inexpressible purity of happiness*—I would almost say, similar to what the blessed above

enjoy. O my God, how do I *sink* in my own eyes when I consider my poverty of returns for all this profusion of goodness. I am lost in amazement that thou hast so long borne with me ; but the cause is, thou art God, whose tender mercies are over all thy works, and *Jesus hath died*, the great propitiation for sin. Blessed God, for his sake grant me more power to *love* and serve thee.

July 21. Still my God appears in my behalf. One day this week, I felt rather a degree of unwillingness to do what I had some small reason to think was the will of God. I hesitated, and asked the Lord to lead me into his will. In a few minutes, my God appeared in my behalf, and gave me a sweet persuasion that, if asked agreeably to my present light, he would soon interpose in a way that would fully satisfy me as to the business in hand. This soon determined me to go forward with cheerfulness : and O, how soon did my God, who is ever faithful, answer for himself. "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name." Surely it is good for me to *trust* in *Jehovah*. O my heavenly Father, strengthen my faith, and enable me to go forward with greater speed. And if it is thy holy will, enlarge my temporal borders, that I may be more able to help the poor and the friendless, especially thy people. Thou hast given me a heart from my youth thus disposed. O give increasing power ; and, O Lord, give thy richest blessing to my weekday charity school in Edinburgh. I have *reason* to believe that thou didst direct to it, when I asked of thee to show me what I could do for thy cause. It has been opened a good many years, and about *eight hundred children*, boys and girls, have been taught, by *various* teachers, every branch of education proper for their line of life, and every possible attempt used to secure the salvation of their immortal souls. Blessed Lord, command thy blessing, and then real good shall be done.

October 7. Still far behind, and deeply conscious of it ; yet my God is good. On Sunday last he exceeded my expectations, for which I felt grateful. But when, Lord, wilt thou satisfy the longing desires of my soul. O hasten the happy time when I shall feel all that conformity to the divine image that the present imperfect state, where the immortal soul is lodged in a tenement of clay, will permit. Yesterday, found it profitable to listen to an account given by one or two valuable ministers in the Methodist connection, respecting what God had done for their souls. They are a highly favoured body of Christians, both ministers and people. I meet with none who enjoy so much of the comforts of religion, of communion and fellowship with the Father and the Son, as they do ; nor with any that have such clear views of the blessings of the new and everlasting covenant.*

* Such was the testimony of LADY MAXWELL, after a long and intimate acquaintance with the venerable founder of Methodism, and several others of his pious coadjutors : and after having watched, with an enlightened and

February 2, 1810. Still confined from the house of my God, which I prove a considerable loss. I long to get there, and to enjoy the deep, the delightful fellowship with which I have been so often favoured: it is a heaven upon earth; O God, restore me to it again, if it is thy holy will and pleasure! But thou art everywhere present. Yesterday Father, Son, and Spirit were most graciously near. Lord, where *thou art is heaven*. Give me, O Lord, to feel *this* every moment. I desire to be grateful for what I have enjoyed, and do enjoy of it. Help me, blessed Lord, to profit more by it!

— 16. Still my gracious God preserves me, and, from time to time, allows me sweet fellowship with Father and Son. What a great blessing! On last Thursday I was highly favoured in this respect, and those who were with me. Jehovah was sensibly and most graciously nigh. O my God, let these precious visitations prove much more transforming than ever. I long for this. Speak, Lord, and it shall be so: and O, make me more useful to others!—strengthen my delicate frame;—fill me with faith and with the Holy Ghost.

March 2. Upon a survey of the last eight days, they have not been very comfortable. I have felt at a partial distance from the Source of my happiness. My body has been afflicted; my nerves and spirits the same. O my God, when not happy in *thee*, all within feels an aching void. O Lord, remove whatever hinders that *close* communion with Deity with which thou dost so highly favour me in general. On Thursday last, thou didst deal favourably with me, for which I would praise thee. O that

discriminating eye the principal movements of this body of Christians for nearly half a century: a testimony surely sufficient to *neutralize* for ever the low ribaldry and blasphemy of the "Vicar of Manachan," and to outweigh the ten thousand false deductions which either have been, or yet may be made, by the purblind metaphysics of a certain semi-infidel school; even though these should be arrayed with all the fascinations of genius, and have the ponderous name of some far-famed poet laureate thrown with them into the scale. But Lady Maxwell's testimony, it will be said, can only be considered as *ex parte* evidence. It may, therefore, just be fair to add the following historical sketch, recently drawn by the able pencil of one who will not be accused of *party* attachment:—"Contemplate the progress of *Methodism*, from its small beginnings, under its indefatigable Founder. That system which reckons nearly half a million members and a thousand preachers; which can speak of scholastic learning and pulpit eloquence inferior to none of any other denomination; which has its missionaries in every quarter of the globe; which is continually and deservedly rising in public esteem, was, about seventy years ago, confined to two ministers and some thirty or forty members, who had to work their way against the brutal violence of the mob, the injustice of magistrates, the frowns of lukewarm Christians, and the contempt of avowed infidels. The history of this indefatigable, zealous, and useful denomination will stand to the end of time, as a check to the despondency, and an encouragement to the hopes of those who are anxious to glorify God in seeking the salvation of their fellow creatures."—*Vide a sermon, preached for the benefit of the Port of London Society, May 9, 1820, by the Rev. J. A. JAMES.*

it might be the beginning of better days than ever yet I have enjoyed, if it is thy holy will ;—and O, my gracious God, restore me to thy house of prayer. I long for this. Amen, and Amen.

With the above passage, written in a manner scarcely legible, her ladyship's diary was closed. Her right hand forgot its cunning. Her race was nearly run ; but her lamp was trimmed, her light was burning, and the Bridegroom was at the door. Instead of being restored to God's earthly tabernacle, her divine Master, whom she had so faithfully served, was preparing her triumphant soul speedily to join the assembly of glorified spirits around his throne. For some years her constitution had manifested symptoms of decay, and had imposed upon her more than ordinary attention to her health. From the latter part of the preceding year, her weakness had greatly increased ; and in the early part of the spring of this year, her decline was accelerated by an almost total loss of appetite. And, although every aid of medicine was tried, administered by the hand of a most able physician, who had long attended her, and to whom the peculiarities of her constitution were well known, yet her appetite could not be restored. Nothing, however, appeared to indicate a speedy dissolution until within about a fortnight of her death, when one night she became so very feverish, and her pulse so high, that it was seriously feared that the time of her departure was come. At this time, her attendant requested that she might be permitted to call in some of her ladyship's relations, but received for answer, " No ; it will hurry me. I feel such a divine calm that I wish not to be disturbed." She afterward recovered a little, but being incapable of taking nourishment, her delicate frame gradually sunk. She was frequently visited, about this time, by the Wesleyan minister then in the city, to whom she appeared to suffer no pain of body, nor mental decay. She expressed her hearty thanks for every little attention which was shown to her, and poured her solemn benedictions on all who came near her. As she was very weak, the minister who visited her did not urge her to speak, but when she inclined to it of her own accord. Having on one occasion joined with her in prayer, he left her abruptly, as she appeared to be engaged in some mental exercise ; when, as soon as he was gone, the physician came in, and inquired how she felt herself ; she thanked him for all his kindness and attention, but assured him that her mind was so absorbed in divine things that she could neither speak of the body nor of the world. At another time she was asked by the minister how she was, but she had only strength to say, " God is with me." Two days before her death he called upon her, when she desired him to be seated, and appeared very wishful to speak, but her strength was gone. She was only able to say that through her affliction she had " had no painful exercise of mind ;"—that her " confi-

dence was unshaken," and her "peace inexpressibly sweet." She was visited again on the day that she died, when, without pain, and in the perfect use of her senses and faculties, she seemed to be gently breathing herself away; and, on the afternoon of the same day, while one of the ministers of the city was engaged with her in prayer,

"She took her last triumphant flight
From Calvary's to Zion's height."

Thus died Lady Maxwell, July 2, 1810, in which the society to which she belonged lost its oldest member, the world one of its best inhabitants, and the church universal, throughout the earth, one of its brightest ornaments.

The following letter, addressed to a friend of her ladyship, by the Hon. Miss Napier, will throw farther light on this painful, blissful, parting scene.

TO MRS. C.

Castle-street, Edinburgh, July 14, 1810.

MADAM,—Knowing the great regard which beloved Lady Maxwell entertained for you, I cannot resist writing a few lines to inform you of an event that will doubtless give you *real pain*. Her dear ladyship died on the second instant. Her health had gradually declined, ever since last November. Three of the most eminent physicians attended her, who apprehended no danger till within six weeks of her death. She died, blessed woman, as she had lived, rejoicing in the God of her salvation, and in the full assurance of eternal happiness.

She was quite aware of her situation, and told me that from the time she was taken ill she was fully persuaded death was in the cup: but from tenderness to me, she never adverted to the subject till within a fortnight of her death. From that time till she departed, her conversation was more like that of an inhabitant of heaven than of one still encumbered with a body of clay. She expired without a sigh, struggle, or groan; and this was literally in answer to prayer. I had been long her selected confidential friend, as well as her relation; had lived under the same roof with her for some years, and slept in the same room; so that to me this event is most mournful. But I am convinced the change to her is so glorious that I ought to turn my tears into hymns of joy.

I do endeavour to comfort myself by reflecting on what she is now enjoying. I doubt not but many hymns were sung on her entrance into her heavenly Father's kingdom, and that a celestial host conducted her to her Saviour, to her King, and to her God. Then, then began her glory! She, being crowned with glory, and honour, and immortality, is set down at God's right hand, to drink at the fountainhead of pleasure, for evermore.

I must remember, too, many, *many* mercies, which are mixed in this bitter cup. She did not outlive her usefulness : her faculties remained unimpaired ; and she has gone to receive her unspeakable reward, before the days of old age arrived in which she would have found no pleasure. Her life and death are lessons which I trust I shall never forget. May they be blessed to me, and to all who knew, or were connected with her : and may we more and more strive to walk at an humble distance in her steps, that our last end may be like hers.

God highly honoured me in appointing me the melancholy duty of attending her. O, such a deathbed ! It appeared like the verge of heaven—like waiting in the sanctuary surrounded by angels and archangels—and, above all, a place which the presence of God rendered sacred.

There was never, surely, greater lamentation than has been made for her by all ranks of society. A funeral sermon was preached on this mournful occasion, on Sunday evening, in her free school : another is to be preached in the church for her dear ladyship to-morrow ; and one in her chapel at Workington, &c., &c. And, I trust, if it be possible, one at Hope Chapel, by some of your ministers, who knew her exalted character and real worth.

I am, dear madam, with respect, yours,

A. NAPIER.

The mortal remains of this eminent servant of God lie interred in the Grey Friars churchyard, Edinburgh; to wait for the morning of the resurrection, when Jesus "shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe." A monumental tablet has been erected, on which is the following inscription:—

Sacred
To the memory of
DAME DARCY BRISBANE,
Widow of
Sir Walter Maxwell, of Pollock, Bart.,
And youngest daughter
Of the late
Thomas Brisbane, Esq., of Brisbane;
Died at Edinburgh,
July 2, 1810:

Who was equally distinguished for her exalted piety, benevolence,
and Christian virtues, as she was for her amiable disposition
and dignified manners. Prov. xxxi, 29.

Now she has dropp'd her cumbrous clay,
And joyful soars the shining way;
While kindred spirits spread their wings,
And bear her to the King of kings.
Long had she known the Saviour's love,
And fix'd her heart on things above;
Long had she run, with even pace,
A useful—not uncertain race.
With various gifts and graces fraught,
By the unerring Spirit taught,
She warn'd, allured, with fervent zeal,
Nor dared religion to conceal.
And now she shines in endless light,
In all her Father's glory bright;
A spotless robe to her is given,
And all the glorious joys of heaven;
She sees, with joy, her Saviour's face,
And sings the triumphs of his grace:
Then casts her crown before his throne,
And glory gives to God alone.

This monument is erected by her nephews, and trustees,
Colonel Brisbane, of Brisbane, and Archibald
Swinton, Esq., W. S., as a mark of
their affectionate regard.

CHARACTER OF LADY MAXWELL.

To portray with accuracy the character of LADY MAXWELL certainly required a pencil of more than ordinary ability. "It is true, that a person of inventive mind, or a lively imagination, might draw an *ideal* character, combining whatsoever things are pure, pious, amiable, and of good report; and by applying this to Lady Maxwell, fancy would become *reality*, and fiction would be sober narrative of fact: for her character and conduct would bear him out triumphant. Yet, as there is something peculiar to every person; something which is properly their own, and their ownelves; as untransferable as personal identity, and by which their acquaintance will easily recognize them in the crowd; so the person who has an eye that can catch these peculiarities, and a hand which can throw them on the canvass, each in its proper light, natural attitude, and just proportions, that person is a real painter of character; and to such a one, that of Lady Maxwell would be a subject worthy of the best efforts of his greatest powers."

For the following concentrated view of some of the many excellences which were so happily combined in the life and character of this eminent saint, the editor is indebted to the MEMOIR of his worthy friend alluded to in the preface of this work. It has been preferred to any thing he might have attempted; not only on account of its own intrinsic worth, but also on account of the following interesting fact. This delineation was drawn, not from an examination of her ladyship's writings, but from personal observation, and the unanimous testimony of numerous friends. It is, therefore, conceived that it furnishes a most satisfactory proof that her ladyship's conversation and deportment strictly corresponded with all that has been met with, in the record of her own experience. Principles were reduced to practice; resolutions formed in the closet had their appropriate influence on the life; and a happy consistency between profession and doing was maintained, which secured the ready assent and approbation of every pious and impartial observer. It has been remarked that few persons were known to speak of her ladyship in any other terms than those of "*good Lady Maxwell.*" It is a brief but full and striking character of a primitive worthy, by the pen of inspiration,—“He was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith: and much people was added to the Lord,” Acts xi, 24.

“Lady Maxwell’s person was a little taller than the ordinary size, slender, regular in its form, just in its proportions, and remarkably straight: her complexion inclining a little more to dark than light. Her features quite feminine, yet bold, every line full of meaning, and strongly marked with intelligence. Her

eye was quick and penetrating, yet full of sweetness. And when she was bordering on her seventieth year, time had neither impaired her sight, nor drawn furrows on her countenance; while she sat and walked as erect, and moved with as much ease and grace, as when in her twentieth year. The amiable part of her manner was scarcely perceived by strangers at first sight, in consequence of a superlative dignity in her mien, which appears to have been so natural, that on very few occasions she could forget it; and this was thought by those who knew her the least, but ill to comport with that high degree of piety to which she laid claim. Acquaintance, however, broke this charm, ventured within the imagined magic circle, and experience corrected the errors of misconception.

"Her *dress*, which was as much dictated by conscience as formed on taste, was *very plain*, being without ornament, or any thing which could serve only for show; yet it was a plainness of her *own*, equally removed from the formal costume of the Quaker, and the frippery of fashion, escaping at the same time the unconscientious expensiveness of both. She did not degrade herself from her rank, nor detract from her personal appearance, by this plainness of apparel; but she found that she could relieve many a suffering creature, and give education to many an orphan child, with what numbers expend in useless decorations, whose income was as much below her own as was their situation in society.

"Her talent for *conversation* was very remarkable, calculated at once to profit and delight. It might be said of her, as Dr. Johnson said of the Rev. John Wesley, 'That she spoke well on every subject.' For although in one sense she was out of the world, she was by no means unacquainted with it, nor yet of those leading events which in continual succession engage the public mind; while in the early part of her life she appeared to have amassed a considerable fund of original observation on things, manners, and men. She was also well acquainted with the general circle of British literature in its various departments, and possessed a memory *retentive* of important facts, and *ready* in supplying at the precise moment, the idea or illustration which was then wanted. She had no partiality for controversy on any subject, and mostly avoided disputable points. When, however, she was called to give an opinion on such subjects, she would do it with ease and clearness; and, by adverting to the data of her own reasoning—to the procedure of her understanding from one link to another of that chain of ratiocination which it had formed, she seldom failed to conduct the minds of others to the same conclusions with those of her own. Her command of language in conversation was not less extraordinary; the characteristics of which were, perspicuity, purity, and elegance. Her words, in general, were so well chosen, that a person of taste

would have been ready to conclude that, had she ransacked all the lexicons of the language, she could not have selected words more justly to express her sense, or to convey the precise ideas she intended to communicate, than those which she employed. With the exception of a very slight Scottish accent, her enunciation was as pure and elegant as her language:—her manner of speaking was ease and dignity in the closest combination; she was always ready, but never rapid. She was never observed to falter, hesitate, or trip in the pronunciation of a word, nor ever to change a word, half expressed, for another which might be deemed more suitable. She was never obtrusive in conversation, and never loquacious; seldom descended from the elevation of her rank and character; and on no occasion transgressed the laws of the best breeding; but by asking pertinent questions, and suggesting useful topics, she rather invited the conversation of others, than monopolized it herself.

“She was perfectly at home on every subject possessed of rational interest; but in every company, and on every occasion, piety to God, and good will toward men, were her favourite themes. Religion, indeed, seemed like her native element, in which she lived and moved, encompassing her like an atmosphere, and accompanying her in all her revolutions in the world and the church: every subject was made to converge to, and terminate in, that great *one*, the enjoyment and practice of which is the chief end of man. On the doctrines of the gospel she spoke with clearness and precision; evincing on some occasions a wonderful degree of discrimination. On subjects of Christian *experience*, she would have been the fit and equal companion of a Fenelon, a De Renty, or a Fletcher. The high and deep things of the kingdom of grace were dwelt upon and treated by her with the easiest familiarity. When she expatiated on that grace which had so emptied her of self, so deadened every feeling and affection to the world, and so spiritualized all her mental powers—which had given her union with God so close, and fellowship so intimate; aged Christians appeared in her presence to be children, having only learned the first principles of the doctrine of Christ. Her noble conceptions of experimental truths were imbodied in language so appropriate and clear; the pious feelings of the Christian were described so rationally and justly, that faith in her seemed to be sense, all spiritual and invisible realities appearing in sight, and God seen by the eye of a mortal. When dwelling on *practical* religion, piety in her hands assumed a more pious appearance; the reasonableness of godliness became more reasonable, while its native beauty seemed to acquire new and fresher charms. Of very few could it be said with a less degree of poetic license than of her, that

‘Truths divine came mended from her tongue.’

“The conversation of such a person must always have been engaging, instructive, and profitable to pious persons, although it could seldom be enjoyed, even by those, without feeling such a mental and religious inferiority as made them dwindle in their own sight into perfect insignificancy. And if any religious person has experienced feelings different from those of pleasurable in Lady Maxwell’s company, let them attribute it to the above mentioned cause.

“To some persons, perhaps, a part of the above may appear of minor importance. But if the design of biography be not to amuse merely by a relation of striking incident, nor yet solely to perpetuate the memory of the dead, but to *instruct* the living, by an exhibition of models of propriety and excellence—excellence, which is uniform, being carried into the very minutiae of life, as well as extending to concerns of greater importance : it is to be hoped that, to younger readers at least, the notice of these things may not be without its use.

“Lady Maxwell’s *piety* was sound, deep, and consistent. Her conversion to God was genuine and clear. *Humility*, which is the first grace implanted in the Christian’s mind, and the first feature formed in the Christian character, and which lies at the root of every other grace, had a conspicuous situation in her temper and conduct. This grace, however, had to display its beauty under some unfavourable circumstances. For as there was nothing in her person, or her early habits, congenial to such a temper, so there was something of such commanding dignity in her whole mein that it is said that, when very young and at school, she maintained such an overbearing superiority of spirit as held all her companions in respectful awe, and led them to keep a measured distance. Nor did that mighty moral change which divine grace had wrought in her soul completely efface all traces of her early habits. For it may be said, almost without a figure, that there were, on some occasions, such an inexpressible air and dignity in her manner as might have awed sovereignty itself to a respectful distance, and caused it to sink in conscious inferiority. But all this was in a *manner* the very opposite of that amiable spirit that always breathed in her heart. It is also true that Lady Maxwell did not generally comply with that custom of *shaking hands* at meeting and parting, which obtains among many religious persons ; and some might deem this a want of Christian condescension. But to say nothing of this practice being in many cases a mere formality, it may be necessary here to observe that Lady Maxwell cherished the nicest sense of what she conceived to be *propriety* in character and action—studying what was proper for her as a *female*, a Christian, and a lady of rank ; considering, at the same time, that what was proper for her in any one of these situations was not at variance with what was due from her in any of the others. In con-

versation, for instance, she was never *masculine*. And as the female never was lost in the philosopher or divine, so in action the titled lady was never entirely merged in the Christian. This she would have considered as a departure from propriety, which was neither warranted by the usages of civilized nations, nor demanded by the genius of Christianity.

“ Yet that elevated manner which she could assume was exceedingly useful to her, especially in shortening visits which had ceased to be mutually profitable, by disposing the visiter voluntarily to retire. This to strangers might have an abruptness which often produced disappointment; yet, on her part, it was in this instance habit formed on design. Few persons more fully estimated the value of time, or more sedulously husbanded it than she did; having in this, as in some other things, taken the father of Methodism for her model. And had she not in some way guarded against the invasion of her time, the number of visitors which she would have had, some drawn by the attractions of her conversation, others to solicit her counsel, and others, perhaps, to impose on her charity by fabricated tales of woe, would not only have interrupted her regular business, but sensibly diminished her mental and religious improvement. Yet, notwithstanding these appearances, she was *humble*: indeed to question this, were to doubt her Christianity. She appears ever to have had such full and clear views of the divine perfections, and of her own want of conformity to the divine image—such extended discoveries of her own religious privileges, and of her disproportionate improvement—such a perception of the attainments of others placed in circumstances less favourable to advance in Christian holiness than her own; as overwhelmed her with a sense of her own unworthiness, and sunk her as into nothing before God. Rank, title, knowledge, and even piety itself, seemed to disappear, while with Job she exclaimed, ‘Behold I am vile!’ If we are to look for farther proof of her humility in her *spirit* and temper, which is certainly a more decisive criterion than the shape of a hat, the cut of a coat, or any adventitious circumstance in a person’s manners, we shall find it in the submissive spirit in which she bore opposition to her plans, and dissent from her opinions: in the deference which she paid to the judgments and suggestions of others, who were as inferior to herself in mind as they were below her in life; as also in that childlike temper in which she received religious instruction from the weakest instruments. And if proof of her humility be required in her *actions*, the very circumstance of her becoming a member of the Wesleyan society at the *time* she did; her continuing in it in the country where she lived; her being always easy of access, perhaps more so to the poor than to the rich; and the easy familiarity with which she met in class and in private band, and received as friends the visits of some

pious females who were pensioners on her bounty—these, as a specimen, may suffice instead of volumes.

“*Love*, which ranks the first among Christian graces, which includes within itself the whole of religion, and without which knowledge is empty, and faith is vain; this had a place in her mind worthy of its pre-eminent nature; it was so deeply seated in her heart, so powerful and uniform in its operation, as more to resemble a principle than a passion. Its origin was heavenly, its nature was divine, and its works were agreeable to that nature, and corresponded with its great source. From the time that she received a concern for a knowledge of divine things, she desired to love God with all her heart, and mind, and soul, and strength; and that inferior degree of this, of which she was made a partaker when she received the justifying grace of God, only tended more to awaken her concern, inflame her ardour, and invigorate her pursuit of that great Christian enjoyment. Her soul cried out for all the divine fulness, nor did she cry in vain. She obtained the desire of her heart, in *salvation from all sin*—in the sanctification of her nature unto God—and in his *perfect love* shed abroad in her heart; and for the space of near thirty years God reigned the undisputed sovereign of all her affections. Nor is there a doubt in the minds of those who know her best, that, had her love to God been subjected to the last decisive test, that of dying for his honour, she would, in that case, have braved death, though in the most terrific form, and worn a martyr’s crown. As she thus loved God with all her heart, so she loved all his rational offspring, and ever felt disposed, to the utmost of her power and means, to serve their present and eternal interests. She entered with all her soul into every scheme which had for its object the removal or diminution of any part of the sum of human wretchedness, or to improve the natural or moral condition of her fellow creatures. And while she was desirous of serving all, she would not injure any. With her the characters of others were as sacred as their property. Speaking evil of the absent was not known in her presence, and even the attempt was very seldom made. Her charity inclined to run to excess; and having formed the best opinion possible of every person, she did not wish to hear any thing which might induce her to make any abatement from that degree of worth at which she had estimated them. She knew too well the proper place for her sex, to take any part in the affairs and government of the church; and, as she allowed of no venders of evil reports, she remained ignorant of any little disorder or impropriety which might exist in individuals; and this undoubtedly contributed much to her own peace. Very different indeed is this from the conduct of those who, under the mistaken idea of indignation against sin, and zeal for the purity of the church and the glory of God, allow their habitations to become a rendezvous of

religious gossiping, until they form the common sewers of pious scandal.

"Lady Maxwell naturally possessed all that quickness of temper, all that acuteness of feeling, and irritability of spirit, which is almost a characteristic of minds endued with the finest sensibilities. Yet so completely had grace effected a conquest of natural temper, and secured the empire of her passions, that on no occasion did indignation or anger, impatience or warmth of spirit, break that guard which grace had given her over herself. Indeed with so masterly a hand did she rule her own spirit, and that in times of extreme exercise ; so conspicuous were her mildness, gentleness, and long suffering, that her warm natural temper seemed rather to be extinguished than subdued. Old things were passed away, and all things were become new.

"*Joy* in God, joy in the Holy Ghost, and joy unspeakable, are Scripture terms, and are expressive of a Christian grace to which no true believer can be an entire stranger. Yet it has been observed that this grace is most distinguishable in the first stages of the Christian's experience, when every thing in the world or kingdom of grace wears the face of novelty ; and when, perhaps, that hole of the pit out of which the hand of mercy has but recently dug the individual is still gaping in sight. For contrasting his past with his present state, such a one must necessarily feel his mind inspired with joy from an assurance of God's salvation. So it has been remarked farther, that, in *general*, religious joy is the most sensible in the minds of those persons whose attainments are not the most strikingly marked by their depth or height. And certainly if we are, in any case, to determine of our being in a state of salvation by the existence or strength of any of those graces which enrich and adorn the Christian's mind, perhaps there is none more equivocal, less certain as a criterion, or that is so subject to feel the operation of disturbing causes, both from without and within, than that of joy. That supreme love to God, and submission to his authority, which fix the mind into a determination rather to die than to sin, form a much more conclusive proof of our being in a state of acceptance than any measure of joy which we can feel. On the subject of *religious joy*, Lady Maxwell said but little. For although she was not a stranger to this spiritual enjoyment, and notwithstanding her mental comforts were not subject to those fluctuations which are but too common with many, yet to *rapturous* or *ecstatic* joy she was a stranger. She would speak [as she has written] of a solid, settled peace ; a divine tranquillity ; an overwhelming sense of the divine goodness, which rather sunk, than elated her soul ; a losing herself in God ; the deep teachings of God's Spirit ; an emptying of the mind, and a filling of her soul with love. And sometimes she spoke of such a consciousness of the whole Deity drawing near to her in his gracious

influences as caused a heavenly solemnity to pervade all her mental powers, producing 'that speechless awe which dares not move.' And often she seemed to realize what is expressed in lines as poetically grand as the divinity is profound,

'Plunged in the Godhead's deepest sea,
And lost in his immensity.'

Yet neither in life, nor in death, did she speak of any extraordinary measure of spiritual joy.

"*Her candour.* Although Lady Maxwell was fully established in her own religious sentiments, sentiments which she had drawn from that infallible source of truth, the word of God; and had embraced them from a full *conviction*, which was the result of earnest, but dispassionate examination; yet she did not exclaim, 'The temple of the Lord' alone 'are we,' but indulged the most Christian charity toward all who laid Christ as the foundation, and held him as the Head. She loved and esteemed good people of every religious persuasion; being of opinion that when the essentials of Christianity are maintained, sentiments in religion form a less considerable part of the thing than many persons seem to apprehend, or, at least, less than most are disposed to grant. As she often attended that church in which she had been educated, so she often made grateful mention of the profit which she there received; and of various ministers, both of the English and Scotch establishments, as well as of dissenters of both countries, who occasionally visited her, she spoke in terms of the highest respect. Yet, while she admired the splendour of talent in some, and extent of theological knowledge in many, and revered the piety of all; and while she rejoiced that they preached Christ as the only foundation of a sinner's hope, she could not forbear lamenting that any of them should stop short, by not insisting on every individual *knowing* his personal interest in the Redeemer; and she has moreover observed that some of those with whom she had conversed on that subject, and whose views on other points were strictly evangelical, yet entertained the strongest doubts on the knowledge of salvation being the common privilege of the children of God. And yet such circumstances as these were adverted to in such mild and guarded terms as showed that she felt it rather as a subject of deep regret, than as affording matter for a sweeping sentence of condemnation. Such persons she believed might be Christians themselves, but were not the most likely to make Christians of others; so that, notwithstanding the superiority of their learning and powers, they would not be the teachers of her ladyship's choice.

"Nor was her candour less manifested toward the ministers of her own religious community than to those of others. In a society organized like that of the Wesleyan Methodists, where the whole connection is divided into distinct portions, and each

portion supplied successively by a change of ministers, of every degree of standing in the work, and every order and variety of talent, both natural and acquired ; it must almost necessarily be the case that the hemisphere of each portion of such a body must be illuminated at different times by stars of very different magnitudes ; or that their churches must possess an eloquent Apollos, or consolatory Barnabas, a Boanerges, the thunderer, or a youthful Timothy, in tardy or rapid succession. Amid such changes, Lady Maxwell could not fail to discern some whose minds possessed a greater elevation and richness than others : some whose modes of thinking, and whose powers of giving body to conception, and adorning to thought, were more in unison with her own correct taste than those of others. This she saw and felt ; and while she acknowledged, she prized the privilege. For, with the exception of the saving grace of God, and the inward satisfaction arising from doing good to others, she had no delight superior to the intellectual luxury enjoyed under the ministry of the workman that needeth not to be ashamed, who rightly divides the word of truth ; yet she never made such men her idols ; nor, in her attendance on gospel ordinances, gave them a marked preference. The ministry of the young, as well as the old, the inferior as well as the superior, was attended and listened to by her. It was no subject of inquiry, who is the preacher, but when is the time ? And as the expectations of her mind were raised far above all human instruments, so she seldom failed of receiving the end of the ordinance : for although she could not on every occasion calculate on meeting with an intellectual repast, she could always contemplate a spiritual feast.

“ This lesson, of respecting the person of no teacher, appears to have been learned by her own experience. For we find her, at an early period of her Christian life, sometimes soliciting Mr. Wesley for the appointment or reappointment of certain preachers of *name* to Edinburgh ; but she afterward learned, as she followed on to know the Lord, that *he* is the proper judge of the fitness of those instruments by which he shall carry on his own work, and promote his own glory. She was ever ready to bestow commendation on whomsoever in the least deserved it, but the most delicate censure was scarcely known to fall from her lips. And if on some occasions she gave to one teacher greater marks of regard than those shown to another, it was on account of the *spirit* of the person, or some congeniality of mind with her own, on the subject of Christian experience, rather than on account of superior public talents.

“ During the space of about forty years, Lady Maxwell was her own chaplain. For some time after she became acquainted with divine things, she employed a pious minister of the Scottish establishment to officiate in that capacity, but with which she soon became dissatisfied. For being placed by providence at

the head of her own household, she considered that that relation imposed upon her the performance of certain duties which could not be discharged by proxy; and of which duties, that of conducting family worship she esteemed as not the least. It was not, however, without much reasoning and considerable conflict that duty and conscience triumphed over spurious shame and false delicacy. But having once overcome reluctance, and begun the practice, she found an ample reward; duty became privilege, and the work was wages. When she was in health she read the Scriptures, and prayed extempore with her whole family morning and evening; and in these exercises, not only evinced the fervour of her devotion, but displayed the resources of a mind richly furnished out of the divine treasury. For to some of those persons who had been in the habit of joining with her in family worship for many years, and who were very adequate to detect any thing like a form or sameness in her manner, it was astonishing what an almost endless variety, both in petition and expression, she always had at command. Nor was there any appearance of a falling off in the latter part of her life, when it might have been expected that infirmities and age would have considerably impaired the energies of her mind.

“To talk of a good man or woman who does no good, is to talk about a monster of imagination which has no positive existence. ‘Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and the widow in their affliction.’ ‘For whoso hath this world’s good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?’ It will not be unto such as say, ‘Lord, Lord, bless thy holy name,’ that the Judge will award that plaudit, ‘Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you;’ but to those who have fed, and clothed, and visited his necessitous and suffering members. This is not merely a proof of the existence and reality of inward religion, the ripe fruit of piety; but it is religion itself, a resemblance of the divine goodness: and all the apparatus of redemption is constructed, and all the regenerating influences of the Spirit are employed on the mind, to infuse the disposition, to fix the principle, and impart the moral power, to continue patient in well doing. There was no trait in Lady Maxwell’s character more prominent and fair, than her *benevolence*. Her ardent desire for getting good by constant recourse to the Saviour’s fulness was not more intense than her wish to be useful to her fellow creatures; and perhaps very few examples have occurred of means so comparatively limited being husbanded so well as to produce such a quantum of benefit to mankind.

“Her pecuniary resources, especially during the latter part of her life, were not the most abundant, considering the rank and station which she had to uphold in society. For although she

might be left a widow in affluent circumstances, yet being a dowager lady, confined to a fixed income, the depreciation of the value of money in more than half a century must considerably have curtailed her means of doing good. But she saved all that she could for the sole purpose of giving, and by the latter her funds were constantly kept low. She was, as has been noticed, singularly plain in her dress, genteelly frugal in her household, and thus, by avoiding every useless expense, she acquired the power of conferring more in charity than many possess with ten times her income. And all that was in her power to do, she did to the very utmost. There was scarcely a humane institution, or a private or public charity, whether for the repose of age or the instruction of youth, the relief of indigence or the help of sickness; for the reformation of morals or the spread and support of religion, from which she did not receive applications, and to which she did not contribute. She erected and supported a school, in which, at the time of her death, about eight hundred children received a good education; and each a copy of the Scriptures on leaving the school. And such were the encouraging effects produced by this school as induced her ladyship, by will, to provide for its continuance to the end of time. As she was prepared for every good work, the subject of her charities is an almost endless one. Could the dead arise, and would the living speak,—the poor she has helped, the sick she has relieved, the orphans protected, and the friendless assisted,—embarrassed honest tradesmen that she raised above difficulty,—modest merit which she brought into notice,—the youth whom she instructed, and set out in the world:—could these, or would they speak, an army would rise to bless her memory. But she not only employed her money, but her tongue, which was persuasive—her pen, which was urgent—and her influence, which was mild, but powerful among her friends, to obtain their assistance. And it has been said that there was no sum which she gave, however small, no institution which she patronized, nor an individual, who became the object of her charity, but what she followed with particular, earnest prayer to God, that what she had done might receive his blessing."

THE END.





Deacidified using the Bookkeeper process.
Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide
Treatment Date: May 2006

PreservationTechnologies

A WORLD LEADER IN PAPER PRESERVATION

111 Thomson Park Drive
Cranberry Township, PA 16066
(724) 779-2111

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 017 527 234 3

